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Regalia of Lynn Regis.

PLAN  
of  
*L Y N N*  
in  
*Norfolk.*





THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
LYNN,

*Civil, Ecclesiastical, Political, Commercial, Biographical,  
Municipal, and Military,*

FROM

THE EARLIEST ACCOUNTS TO THE PRESENT TIME;

INTERSPERSED

With occasional remarks on such national occurrences as may serve to  
elucidate the real state of the town, or the manners, character,  
and condition of the inhabitants at different periods.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

A COPIOUS INTRODUCTORY ACCOUNT

OF ITS

*Situation, Harbour, Rivers, Inland Trade and Navigation,  
the Ancient and Modern State*

OF

Marshland, Wisbeach, and the Fens,

AND

Whatever is most remarkable, memorable, or interesting, in other  
parts of the adjacent country.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY WILLIAM RICHARDS, M. A.

*Honorary member of the Pennsylvania Society, for promoting the Abolition  
of Slavery, and the relief of free Negroes unlawfully held in bondage.*

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VOL. I.

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1812.



HISTORY

OF

THE EARLIEST ACCOUNTS TO THE PRESENT TIME

OF THE EARLIEST ACCOUNTS TO THE PRESENT TIME

A COMPANION TO THE HISTORY OF THE

EARLIEST ACCOUNTS TO THE PRESENT TIME

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# HISTORY OF LYNN.



## PART I.



### INTRODUCTION:

CHAP. 1. Site of Lynn—Account of its harbour and that of Wisbeach—Ancient and present state of its rivers—Inland Navigation—Drainage—Projects of improvement—State of its shipping, commerce, and population, at different periods.

SECTION 1. *Situation of the Town—its distance from the sea, &c.—its harbour—river Ouse and its tributary streams.*

LYNN is situated on the eastern side of Marshland, and of the Great Level, or Fen Country, about 12 miles from the Sea, 42 from Norwich, 46 from Cambridge, and 98 from London. \* It stands partly on each side of the Ouse, but chiefly on its eastern banks; though it is supposed to have stood originally all on the opposite shore, and hence that part of it is still called *Old Lynn*.

\* The exact situation of Lynn, as to its Latitude and Longitude, has been ascertained with the utmost accuracy by the ingenious and scientific Mr. Ezekiel Walker. He informs the Author that the Latitude of St. Nicholas' Chapel in this town, deduced from observations with a mural circle made by Mr. Troughton, is 52 degrees, 45 minutes, 25 seconds, North; and its Longitude 1 minute, 35 seconds, in time, East of Greenwich.



The Haven or Harbour is capacious, but the entrance to it is accounted somewhat difficult, and even dangerous, owing to the numerous Sandbanks, and the frequent shiftings of the channel, occasioned by the loose and light nature of the sandy and silty soil at the bottom. On which account it is not deemed safe for ships to go in or out without pilots, who are, or ought always to be well acquainted with the variations and actual state of the channel. In the ages preceding the 13th century this harbour, compared with its present width, is said to have been very narrow, being only a few perches over, though its depth of water was then probably no less, if not greater than it is at present.

The Ouse over against the town is reckoned about as wide as the Thames above London Bridge. Its name is evidently of British origin, † and corresponds with those of several others of our rivers; such as the *Usk*, *Esk*, *Ex*, *Isis*, &c. The word signifies, *a stream*, or *the river*, by way of eminence. It is called the *Great Ouse*, to distinguish it from that called the *little* or *lesser Ouse*, which is now one of its tributary streams, and joins it some way below *Ely*, though it had formerly no connection with it. It is also called the *eastern Ouse*, to distinguish it from the *Northern* or *Yorkshire* river of the same name.

As Lynn owes most of its consequence to this river, which forms its communication with the Sea, and gives it so great an extent of inland navigation, and conse-

† The original or British name may pretty safely be concluded to have been *Wysg* or *Gwyg*.



quently such a vast commercial intercourse with the interior parts of the country, it will not be improper here to give some account of it, together with its principal branches, or those tributary streams which render it so considerable among the British navigable rivers.

*Kinderley*, many years ago, has given the following account of this river and its several branches: “The Ouse (says he) formerly *Usa* or *Isa*, which is the most famous of all the rivers that pass through this Level, has its original head on a gentle rising ground full of springs, under Sisam in Northamptonshire, 54 miles from Erith bridge, at which place it first touches the Isle of Ely. It falls by Brackley, Buckingham, Newport Pagnel, Bedford, Huntingdon, and St. Ives, to Erith, and so on till it comes to Lynn. It has 5 rivers emptying themselves into it, beside many brooks and rills; *Grant*, *Mildenhall*, *Brandon*, *Stoke*, and the river *Lenne*, or Sandringham Ea [otherwise *Nare*,] which rises under Lycham, and comes by Castleacre, Narford, and Sechy.” [He omits the *Nene*, which surely he ought to have mentioned.] Afterward he adds, That the Ouse by its situation, and having so many navigable rivers falling into it from eight several counties, does therefore afford a great advantage to trade and commerce, since hereby two cities, and several great towns are therein served; as Peterbororough, Ely, Stamford, Bedford, St. Ives, Huntingdon, St. Neots, Northampton, Cambridge, Bury St. Edmunds, Thelford, &c. with all sorts of heavy commodities from Lynn, as Coals, Salt, Deals, Fir-timber, Iron, Pitch, Tar, and Wine, thi-



ther imported; and from these parts great quantities of Wheat, Rye, Coleseed, Barley, &c. are brought down these rivers, whereby a great foreign and inland trade is carried on, and the breed of seamen is increased. The Port of Lynn supplies *six* counties wholly, and *three* in part."

But of the Ouse and the other Lynn rivers, no one, perhaps, has given so full and so good an account as Mr. *Skrine*, in his general account of the british rivers. "The Ouse (he says,) traverses a very considerable part of the Midland counties of England, rising in two branches, not far from Brackley and Towcester on the borders of Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire, from whence its course is eastward, a little inclined to the north, through Buckinghamshire, joined at Newport Pagnel by a small stream from Ivinghoe in the south; to reach Bedford it descends by many windings toward the south, and then joined by the *Hyee* from Woburn, and the *Ivel* from Biggleswade, it pursues its original direction to Huntingdon, where a combination of streams from the south-west contributes to its increase. From thence it passes nearly eastward through the centre of the Fens of Cambridgeshire, where it receives the *Cam* near Ely from the south-west, and afterwards the *lesser Ouse* from Woolpit and Ixworth in the south-east, joined by the *Larke* from Bury St. Edmunds; it then inclines more and more to the north, till it falls into the great Gulph of the sea between the projecting coasts of Norfolk and Lincolnshire, beneath the walls of Lynn Regis."

The Ouse is generally a stagnant stream, neither giving



nor receiving much beauty in all the great tract through which it passes. Its course is uniformly dull and unimportant to Buckingham; nor is it at all an object from the princely territory of *Stowe*, which abounds in grand scenes and buildings."

This river "does not improve much," (he further observes) "as it traverses the plain counties of Bedford and Huntingdon, though it adds some consequence to their capitals, being there navigable; at St. Ives it sinks into those great marshes which abound on this part of the eastern coast, through Norfolk, Huntingdonshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire."

The *Hyee* which meets it a little below Bedford, passes near the Duke of Bedford's noble domain at Woburn Abbey, and the *Ivel* flows northward to it through a dull uninteresting tract of country.

The *Cam* is composed of two branches, one of which rises on the borders of Bedfordshire, and unites with the other, which bears the classic name of *Granta*, flowing from the confines of Essex, through the highly ornamented grounds of Audley End. They unite near Cambridge, and then run nearly eastward till the Ouse receives them, a little way from Ely.

The *Cam* receives no small portion of beauty from the academical shades of Cambridge, being crossed by bridges from most of the principal Colleges, whose gardens join the public walks on its banks, which are finely planted and laid out. The stream itself is but stagnant

and muddy, yet it adds something to the peculiar traits of the landscape, with the several stone bridges; nor do the fronts of the colleges, as they appear in succession, intermixed with thick groves, any where shew themselves to such advantage. The Area in front of Clare Hall, and the new building of King's College, with its superb chapel, matchless in that species of Gothic Architecture which has been called "*the improved*," exhibit one of the most striking displays in England. Soon afterward the Cam sinks into the Fens, where the proud pile and towers of Ely Cathedral appear finely elevated over the level, just above the junction of the Cam and the Ouse.

A dreary tract of Marsh accompanies these united rivers to Downham in Norfolk; nor does the country much improve afterwards, but the channel becomes very considerable, and the exit of these rivers is splendid, where the flourishing port and great trade of Lynn present a croud of vessels."

To the above account by Skrine, which is but imperfect, other rivers might be added, which join the Ouse in the latter part of its progress, and which ought not to be left here unnoticed; as the *Nene*, from Peterborough, Whittlesea, and March; the *Wissey* or *Winson*, from Stoke, and the *Lenne* or *Nare*, from Narborough and Sechhithe. The former, a large branch of which joins the Ouse at Salter's Lode, is a Northamptonshire river, and rises near Catesby, under Anby Hill, in that county, and making Northampton in its way, passes from thence to Wellingborough, and along



by Higham Ferrers, Thrapston, Oundle, Walmsford or Wandesford, Castor, Peterborough, Whittlesea, March, and on to Salter's Lode and Lynn. The Wissey or Winson rises in the neighbourhood of Necton and Bradenham, in Norfolk, and running by Pickingham, Cressingham, Ikborough, Northwold, Stoke, and Helgay, enters the Ouse some way above Downham. The Lenne or Nare, otherwise Sandringham Ea, is also a Norfolk river, which after running by Litcham, Lexham, Castleacre, Westacre, Narford, Narborough, Pentney, and Sechhithe enters the Ouse at the South or upper end of the town of Lynn. It is a narrow, but in some places a deep and rapid river, and navigable a good way into the country; but has no very beautiful or striking sceneries any where upon or near its banks. ‡ Like all the rivers of this low, flat, and dull country, it presents nothing that can be called striking or very remarkable, unless it be, a perpetual succession, or uniformity of dullness.

‡ Except, perhaps, about Castleacre.

SECTION 2. *Further account of the river Ouse—remarkable phenomenon—the poet Cowper—supposed etymology of the name of Wisbeach—the Ouse diverted from its ancient course and outlet—King John's disastrous passage over that river, in his last progress from Lynn—Extract from Vancouver.*

In the respectable work called *The Beauties of England*, this remarkable circumstance is quoted from *Walsingham* relating to the river Ouse—That on the first of January 1399 it suddenly ceased to flow between the villages of Snelson and Harrold near Bedford, leaving its channel so bare of water that the people walked at the bottom for full three miles. || So strange a phenomenon seems not very easy to account for. It is said to have been for a long time considered as *ominous* of those dire dissensions and bloody wars which the opposite claims of the rival Houses of York and Lancaster shortly afterward occasioned. Nor is it at all wonderful that such an idea should gain credit in those dark and superstitious times: but to men of enlightened minds it must appear a very idle and pitiful conceit. A Dr. Childrey endeavoured to account for the said phenomenon, by supposing the stream above to have been congealed by a sudden frost: but this also is very properly deemed untenable by the writers of the work above mentioned; and they assign, as the most probable cause, in their opinion, that the earth had suddenly sunk in some part of the channel, so as to form there a deep and capacious cavity, into which the waters flowed till it was filled up,

|| Something of the same kind is related of the rivers Thames and Medway in the reign of Henry I. See Stow, 138.



leaving the channel below in the mean time nearly dry, so that people might then actually walk at the bottom, as the story asserts. This appears reasonable enough, and was probably the real case; but as it cannot be now very interesting there seems no need to investigate it any further.

Dull and uninspiring, and in no sense classical ground, or a favourite haunt of the muses, as the banks of the Ouse have been generally, and perhaps justly considered, it must not be forgotten that they are become of late entitled to no small portion of celebrity, by the distinguished productions of the ingenious and excellent COWPER, one of the best, if not the very best of all our English poets of these latter days. He spent the greatest part of his time, and composed most of his works in the vicinity of this river. Henceforth it may therefore be deemed a classic stream: but it will be long, perhaps, before its banks shall have again the honour of numbering among its inhabitants a poet or a man of equal worth, genius, or renown. §

Here it may be proper further to observe, that the Ouse did not always visit Lynn, or pass that way in its progress to the Ocean. In ancient times its course is said to have been by Wisbeach, to which that town probably owes its name: *Wis*, or *Wys*, being apparently

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§ His last years were spent at East Dereham in Norfolk, where he finished his course in 1800. In the north transept of that parish church, where his remains have been deposited, is a neat monument of white marble, with the following inscription:—

but another word for *Ouse*, and *Wisbeach* the very same thing with *Ousebeach*, and signifying the beach, side or bank of the Ouse; in other words, a place or town on the Shore and near the mouth of that river. \*

What diverted this river from its ancient and original course is said to have been a great inland flood, which, meeting with obstruction, choked up the channel (already become bad and neglected) broke over the banks, and deluged the fens to a vast extent; from the effects of which they have never been fully recovered to this day.

This flood so deprived of a passage to the sea by the usual channel, and consequently overflowing the adjacent country to a great depth, became a most grievous and ruinous annoyance to the Fen people. At last, in order to get rid of so disastrous and terrible a nuisance, instead of taking common sense for their guide, and following nature, by opening the channel to the ancient

In Memory of

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQUIRE,

Born in Hertfordshire, 1732 :

Buried in this Church, 1800.

Ye who with warmth the public triumph feel  
Of talents dignified by sacred zeal,  
Here, to Devotion's Bard devoutly just,  
Pay your fond Tribute due to COWPER's dust.  
England, exulting in his spotless fame,  
Ranks with her dearest sons' his fav'rite name.  
Sense, fancy, wit, suffice not all to raise  
So clear a title to affection's praise:  
His highest honours to the heart belong:  
His virtues form'd the magic of his Song.

\* The *Cam* and the *Larke* also passed then along with the *Ouse* by *Wisbeach*.



outfall at Wisbeach, they determined, seemingly, to force nature, and set common-sense at defiance, by opening a passage for the inundating waters, and consequently for the future course of the great Ouse, the Cam, and the Larke into the narrow bed of the lesser Ouse, from Little-port Chair to Priests Houses, a cross that ridge, or higher ground, by which nature seemed to have forbidden the union of these rivers. \*

In this illjudged and preposterous measure most of the existing evils in regard to the bad state of the Lynn and Wisbeach Harbours, the inland navigation and the drainage of the Fens have probably originated. The Ouse and the other rivers before mentioned have ever since followed the same new and unnatural track: Nor is it now very likely that they will ever again be permitted to follow any other. This memorable event, according to *Dugdale*, happened in the reign of Henry the third: so that in the reign of King *John*, the great patron of Lynn, the river or body of fresh water which flowed that way was but very small and narrow; and it was in crossing the Ouse, which did not then pass by Lynn, that he lost his baggage and treasures, and probably many of his men. Ancient records say that it was in crossing *Wellstream*, which was then the name of

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\* See *Vancouver's Map*, and his *Appendix*, p. 10, where the original track or course of these rivers appears to have been divided by a kind of ridge or higher ground from that of the lesser Ouse and Wessey or the river of Stoke, (sometimes also called Winson and Storke) which together with the Lenne or Nare seem to have been the only original Lynn rivers.

the Ouse in its approach to Wisbeach and the Sea, that the said King suffered those losses. ‡

The following Extract from *Vancouver's* APPENDIX to his *Agricultural Report* will serve, it is thought, to corroborate some of the foregoing observations.—“From the highlands in Suffolk (between the Mildenhall and Brandon rivers) to the east of Welney, Outwel, Emneth, and thence to the sea a positive dividing ground exists, formed by the hand of nature, strongly marked, and distinctly to be seen between the waters of the Lynn and of the Wisbeach Ouse. The hanging level, or natural inclination of the Country on the north side of this dividing ground draws the waters off to the sea through the lesser Ouse to the outfall of Lynn; and on the south side of it draws them off to the sea through the greater Ouse to the outfall of Wisbeach. To the cutting through this dividing ground, in order to force the water of the greater into the lesser Ouse, are all the evils of the south and middle levels of the fens, and of the country below originally and solely to be ascribed. At this time the bed of the Ouse where Denver Sluices now stand, was at least 13 feet below the general surface of the surrounding country; and then it was that, by the free action and reaction of the tides the waters flowed five hours in the haven of Lynn, ascended unto the Stoke and Brandon rivers, and into other streams which nature had wisely appropriated to be dis-

‡ The haven and river of Wisbeach while the Ouse passed that way went by the name of *Wellstream* and the *Water of Well*, while those of Lynn went by the name of *Wigenhale Ea*, and the *Water of Wigenhale*, Vide MS. late Mr. Partridge's.



charged through that outfall; forming the bed of the Ouse to one gradually inclined plain *from the junction of the principal branches of that river into the low country to the level of the Ocean, very near or in the harbour of Lynn.* The Counteracting this disposition of nature by forcing a greater quantity of water into the river than it could discharge into the sea during the time of ebb, necessarily occasioned the highland and foreign waters to over-ride all those, which during the time of ebb, would naturally have drained into the Lynn river, and gave the waters of Buckingham and Bedford an exit into the sea in preference to those which lay inundating the country within a few miles, of their natural outfall.—In this condition at present are all the lower parts of the country bordering upon the Lynn Ouse; and the country above Denver Sluices, Downham, Marshland, and Bardolph fens, exhibits the most important of many other melancholy examples and evidences of it. In the higher parts of the country the consequences of this measure seem to have been severely experienced on the lands exposed to the unembanked waters of the old Ouse, between Hermitage and Harrimere. The Old Bedford river was then cut from Erith to Salter's Lode, as a slaker to the Ouse, to relieve the country through which the Ouse flowed, from Erith to Ely. The Ouse waters thus divided, a great part of them descended through the Old Bedford river in a straight line of twenty miles into the Lynn Ouse. But as that work was judged insufficient and defective, the New Bedford, or one hundred foot river was determined upon, and Sluices were erected at Hermitage to drive all the water of old

Ouse from Erith( through the One hundred foot) into the Lynn Ouse; but that river not having sufficient capacity to utter them to sea, they, reverted up the Ouse, the Stoke and Brandon rivers, drowning the whole of that country, and finally urging the necessity of erecting Denver Sluices, as the only apparent cure for the evils with which the country was then oppressed, and seemed further threatened with. In the execution of this business, with a view of bringing the bottom of the Ouse on a level with that of the hundred foot river( which was cut only five feet deep) it was judged expedient to raise a Dam eight feet high across the bed of the Ouse, upon the top of which the Sole or base of Denver Sluices was laid. This measure has not only defeated the purpose it was designed to promote, but has been the unfortunate cause of a body of sand and sea sediment being deposited in the bed of the Lynn Ouse at least eight feet deep at Denver Sluices, and only terminating in its injurious consequences at the mouth of the Lynn Channel. This shews to every calm and candid mind the necessity of duly considering the probable effects of counteracting the laws of nature, in cases where nature appears experimentally to have had success on her side.—From a due consideration of the obstacles which appear at this time to exist in what has long been considered the principal outfalling drain to the Middle and South levels of the fens, it is surely reasonable to direct our attention to the general inclination of the country with respect to the sea, and to what has all along been pointed out by nature as the main outlet thither, for the waters of the middle and south levels, and see if some



means cannot yet be devised for recovering the general course of the ancient and voluntary passage of the waters through their natural channel of Wisbeach to the sea."

The above passage merits serious and particular attention. The undisputed and indisputable fact, that the course of the Ouse lay formerly by Wisbeach, seems a clear and decisive proof that it was its natural course, and so may be considered as corroborating a great part at least of the above reasoning. Upon the whole, therefore, it seems highly probable that the evils now existing and complained of, as to the bad state of the Wisbeach and Lynn harbours, the inland navigation and fen drainage, have mostly originated in the abovementioned desertion of the Ouse from its ancient and natural outfall, and the forcing of it to Lynn through the channel of the lesser Ouse, in the 13th century, and reign of Henry III. as was before observed.

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SECTION 3. *Effects of the desertion of the Ouse and Nene on Wisbeach and parts adjacent.*

After the above mentioned disastrous aberration of the Ouse some plans, it seems, were formed, and royal Commissions issued to bring it back again into its old deserted channel by Wisbeach, but all proved in the end ineffectual and fruitless, so that the port of Wisbeach, of course would be materially injured. "Of old time" (says Badeslade—that is, while the Ouse and the Nene

discharged themselves that way) “ships of great burden resorted to Wisbeach”—but after those rivers had deserted their ancient outlet, that town soon ceased to be accessible to large vessels. The bed or channel below the town being forsaken by the said rivers, (or at most occupied only by an inconsiderable branch of the Nene, which must have been insufficient to grind or scour it to its former or usual depth,) would gradually be filled up in time with silt and sand; and which evidently has been the case. This is confirmed by a remarkable circumstance related by *Dugdale*—That in deepening the Wisbeach river in 1635, (about 300 years after the desertion of the Ouse,) “the workmen, at eight feet below the then bottom came to another bottom which was stony, and there at several distances found seven boats that had lain there overwhelmed with sand for many ages.” \*

*Atkins*, who wrote in 1608, and dedicated his paper to *Andrews* bishop of Ely, speaks of the Wisbeach channel as “anciently an arm of the sea;” † and says that the time was when all the waters of the Ouse, even those which then passed from Littleport Chair to Lynn had their passage by *Welney* and *Well* to the North Seas at Wisbeach, and from thence to the Washes—and he further observes that writers have said, that King *John*’s people perished in the *Waters of Well*. ‡

\* Hist. Embank. chap. 37.

† By an arm of the sea he meant, probably, something similar to what Lynn Haven is now.

‡ A Commission is said to have been issued 21 Edward I. for sending the *Waters of Well* by Wisbeach, their ancient outfall; which further corroborates the idea that *Wellstream* or *Waters of Well*, was formerly a name of the Ouse about Wisbeach.



From Thorney Red Book he also shews, that *Well Stream* was an ancient appellation of the Wisbeach river. He further adds, that this outfall, or arm of the sea, had Holland and a part of the Isle on one side, and Marshland on the other; these were defended from it by great sea-banks, which in the time of Henry VI were ordained to be made and maintained fifty feet high. Hither of old resorted (he says) ships and vessels of great burden. But the sea, still forsaking the Isle, made the whole passage between Wisbeach and the Washes high marshes and sands; and by the decay of the river, the channel, or outfall, became so shallow and weak, as to admit of people often going over on foot, bare legged under the knees. He also imputes much blame to the people about Wisbeach, in not scouring and dyking the river, as by ancient laws and presentments they ought to have done; and not preserving and maintaining the petty sewers and drains. In consequence of these omissions, not only the fens were drowned, but the means were also lost of draining 13 or 14000 acres of inland grounds, the support of three or four towns on the North of Wisbeach.

That the bad effects of the desertion of the Ouse and Nene from their ancient outfall at Wisbeach, soon became very grievous to that town and the adjacent country, appears by the frequent complaints made, and laws enacted for their relief. Some of those laws were made in the reign of Henry VI, and measures were taken, it seems, in consequence of them, for the relief and benefit

of the sufferers. The most important and beneficial of all those measures appears to be that adopted toward the latter part of the 15th century under the direction of bishop *Morton*.\* “That prelate finding (says Atkins) that beside its being a very chargeable course to his people of the hundred of Wisbeach, once in four or five years to dyke this river, and that notwithstanding this dyking of the river, the outfall below to the seaward nevertheless decayed; and finding that without a great head of fresh waters, to scour both the river and the outfall, all would be lost, took a part of *Hercules’ labour* upon him, and strove to bring in great abundance of fresh waters, by divers courses, out of the Fens, to maintain this channel: viz. the rivers Nene and Welland from *Southea*, and the river of the great cross, or Plantwater, from the united branches of Nene and Ouse, descending by *Benwick*.” But the bishop’s principal undertaking seems to have been the cut of 14 miles, from Peterborough to Guyhorn, by which a large portion of the Nene was brought down

\* Elstobb speaks of several efforts having been made to turn the Nene down to its ancient outfall at Wisbeach; and particularly that about the year 1490 John Morton, bishop of Ely, and Lord Chancellor of England, [afterward Archbishop of Canterbury and a Roman Cardinal] for the better obtaining that end, and for the more effectual recovery of the outfall at Wisbeach, cut a new river, or drain 14 miles in length, 14 feet wide, and about 4 feet deep, beginning at the high grounds, within a mile of Peterborough, and continuing it down to Guyhorn, an hamlet in Wisbeach parish; and setting down a sluice across the old river Nene at Standground, turned the waters of that river down this new cut. This (he adds) with some other works, said to have been done by him, did for a time make some improvement in the fens about Wisbeach, so as to make them good sheep pasture, &c. But this (he further adds) continued not long, being cut too shallow, and not sufficiently embanked, or kept clear and free from impediments and obstructions.” Elstobb’s Observations, p. 25, 26.



to Wisbeach, and proved of no small benefit to that town and harbour, as well as to the drainage of the country. This cut has transmitted the bishop's name deservedly and honorably to posterity; it being ever since known and distinguished under the denomination of *Morton's Leam*. Happy had it been for the world, if all those of his order had deserved so well of their neighbours and of their country. ‡

“By this doing” (says Atkins, referring to the works of bishop Morton) “Wisbeach Fens were made good Sheep pastures, and the fall of the water at Wisbeach became so great, that no man would adventure under the bridge, with a boat, but by veering through, &c. But succeeding ages (he further observes) neglecting these

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‡ Bishop Morton was in his time one of the most distinguished characters in this country. He was a person of deep penetration, singular address, and sound judgment; and possessed, in the highest degree, those rare talents that constitute the profound politician and consummate statesman. He was a warm and determined partisan of the House of Lancaster. Richard, III. rightly considering him as too dangerous a person to be left at liberty, took care betimes to have him secured. He was accordingly imprisoned in the castle of *Brecknock*, where he was committed to the custody of the Duke of Buckingham, then the said king's most powerful and confidential adherent. Somehow he managed to seduce the Duke from his allegiance to Richard, and engage in his scheme in favour of the Earl of Richmond. The Duke's ruin soon followed; but Morton escaped to the continent, where he afterward joined Richmond, and with him returned to England. After his victory at Bosworth, and elevation to the throne, Morton became his most confidential servant and counsellor. He was preferred to be Lord High Chancellor of England, archbishop of Canterbury, and at last, a Cardinal. He may be presumed to have been an adviser and promoter of the most important measures of that reign; of which the depression of the nobles, and elevation of the commons, were not the least, memorable or salutary. He died, before Empson and Dudley came into employ; so that he had no share in their malpractices.

good provisions, have thereby lost the benefit." The blame of this neglect, both Atkins and Sir Clement Edmunds seem to lay entirely on the total want of public spirit, or the selfish and sordid disposition of the people of Wisbeach, who strove at all events to avoid the expence, alledging that the benefit of cleansing and dyking the outfall would altogether accrue to the behoof of the upland country, and therefore that they [the inhabitants of the said upland country] ought to put their hands to the work, and contribute towards it in some reasonable measure. The uplanders, on the other hand, produced divers presentments, some of them as high as Henry VI, shewing, that they ought not to be charged; at the same time expressing a willingness to yield a reasonable aid, when the work was done, if it proved serviceable. But those of Wisbeach required a previous contribution, to be expended as the work should proceed. Their selfishness and perverseness, on these occasions, carried them, it seems, to very extravagant and ridiculous lengths, to elude the charge: "one while saying, they cared not if Wisbeach were a dry town; another while by thinking to keep it as a standing pool; [and again] another while enforcing [or urging] the making of a Sluice between the town and the sea, that the tide should not silt up the river, saying that otherwise the charge of dyking the river would be but cast away. —And to the charge of this Sluice they would call in the high-country people, such as they knew would not easily be brought to it, so that nothing might be done." This preposterous conduct of the Wisbeachers appears to have effectually frustrated every reasonable and salutary proposal. Atkins, however, gives it



as his firm opinion, that were there in the Isle of Ely again another bishop *Morton* the country might well be regained by such means as might be easily set down." \* But it does not appear *that another bishop Morton* has yet risen in the Isle, whatever may be said of the regeneration, reformation, or amendment of the good people of Wisbeach.

Nothing of any consequence appears to have been attempted since, for the benefit of the port or navigation of Wisbeach, except *Kinderley's Cut*, made in 1721 and 1722, by order of the Board of Adventurers, and not without the consent of the town of Wisbeach likewise; only the adventurers [it seems] ought to have had their consent under their hands: at least so says Mr Kinderly. This cut, had it gone forward, would probably have been of great advantage to the river. But by the time that it was completed, and a dam was making across the old channel, to turn the river into the new one, "the Wisbeach gentlemen, falsely, *or by mistake*, apprehending the advantage of a wide indraught over all those spreading sands, and complaining that this new cut was not wide enough, (though it was wider than the river at Wisbeach by twenty feet) and that therefore their river would immediately be choked up, and their navigation lost. [So they now] violently opposed it, and raised the Country for demolishing the works; and after that obtained an injunction from the Lord Chancellor to stop all further progress." † A long vexatious Law Suit ensued, but the

\* Kinderley's Ancient and Present State, 2nd Edit. p. 68.

† Kinderley, p. 77.

Adventurers could not recover the Money they had laid out, amounting to nearly £2000, and the gentlemen of Wisbeach gave ample proof that they still inherited, in full measure, the genuine spirit of their ancestors, before mentioned. Their Harbour has been for some years in a most miserable state, and seems to stand in need of the aid of a *Morton* or a *Kinderly* as much as ever.

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SECTION IV. *The Effects on Lynn, and on its Harbour and Navigation, of the great accession of Fresh Waters in the reign of Henry III.*

Let us now attend to the Ouse and its sister streams, in their new or modern course, by Denver, Downham, St. German's, and Lynn. By the addition of so many large rivers to its former waters, Lynn might be expected to have its Haven, by degrees, both widened and deepened, so as to contribute materially to its future naval consequence, and commercial importance. Previously to this great accession of water, the bed or channel of the river, about St German's, has been represented as so very narrow, that in some places a man might throw himself over with a pikestaff; and in Lynn Haven it is said to have been but six poles, or about an hundred feet wide. But afterward, by the said accession of fresh waters, Lynn Haven and channel were made in time so wide and deep as to become famous for Navigation \*

\* Badeslade p. 98.—Here it ought not to be forgotten that the said large accession of fresh waters to the Lynn river, while it widened and



Things appear to have continued pretty much in this favourable state, till sometime after the erection of the Sluices at Denver; which by preventing the tides from going further up into the country, as before, proved very prejudicial to the harbour and Navigation of Lynn; and the effects are felt, it seems, and much complained of to this day. The free admission of the tides, and the natural course of the freshes are said to have kept other rivers open and navigable; and this appears to have been the case with the Ouse itself, while it possessed those advantages, or till the adventurers erected the said sluices across its channel, which are thought to have proved so very prejudicial, not only to the navigation of Lynn, Cambridge, &c. but even to the draining of the Fen districts and Marshland.

Before the erection of those sluices, the tide is said to have gone up the rivers a very great way. Into the Ouse, and Grant, or Cam, it went, according to *Badeslade*, five miles above their junction, or 48 above Lynn; into the Larke, or Mildenhall river, eight miles above its mouth, or 42 above Lynn; into the lesser Ouse, or Brandon river, ten miles above its mouth, or 36 above Lynn; into the Wessey, or Stoke river, Six miles above its mouth, or 24 above Lynn; and into the Nene,

deepened the harbour, seems to have proved eventually fatal to a great part of West or Old Lynn, which (including one of its churches and church yard) was in time swallowed up by the waters. This, it must be allowed, was a disastrous event. It is, however, an ill wind (as the proverb says) that blows nobody good: though the church is gone, the income remains, which the incumbent still duly receives, for nothing; for it is a sine cure, and not a very poor one.

seven miles above its mouth, or 23 above Lynn. ‡— These rivers are said to be then completely supplied with water from the sea, in the driest seasons, to serve for inland navigation. —The Nene, to Well, March, and Peterborough, &c. with vessels of 15 tuns in the driest times: the Ouse, with vessels of 40 tuns, 36 miles, at least, from Lynn, in ordinary neap tides; and to Huntingdon, St Neots, Bedford, and even as far as 90 miles from Lynn, with vessels of 15 tuns. The tides then raised the waters at Salters Lode 12 feet above low-water mark. These waters in their return scoured the channel, and kept it clear and deep. This seems to have been the case before the erection of the sluices; but whether it would have continued so to this time, may, perhaps, be doubted. Badeslade and Kinderly seem to have entertained different and opposite opinions on the subject; as the reader may see by consulting their respective publications.

In a course of time, Lynn Haven is said to wear from 6 or 8 to 40 poles wide; which seems not improbable, considering the situation of it, and the accession of so many large rivers. In Badeslade's time, as he says, \* it was from 50 to 60 poles in the narrowest part; and

‡ The Nene, of late years, has been gradually choking up, till it is at length become, it seems, a mere shallow ditch, filled with mud, and hardly navigable at any time. Its navigation is become, of course, inconsiderable and unproductive; to the no small loss and injury of those unfortunate people, who, in an evil hour, had entrusted their property in that illfated concern. Most inexcusable mismanagement is said to have occasioned this; and much of the blame has been confidently, if not truly imputed to the abominable inattention and neglect of certain Lynn Merchants.

\* In p. 4.



now it can be no less. The Lynn river, however, has been thought to be still narrower than any other of equal size so near its outfall. Before the erection of the said Dams, or Sluices no complaints appear to have been made of either the haven, or yet the rivers above wanting a competent depth of water. Barges carrying 40 chalders could then go up the Ouse 36 miles, and those that carried from 26 to 30 chalders passed with ease to the very town of Cambridge. Whereas, in Badeslade's time, flat bottom lighters, with eight or ten chalders, could hardly pass. Nor does it appear that things have gotten to a better state since. As to the haven, or harbour of Lynn, it was at those times wide, deep, and commodious. In 1645 its breadth is said to have been about a furlong. Ships then, and for some years after, rode at the south end of the town, and the west side in two fathoms, at low water. So they also did at the Crutch; and the largest ships could go to sea at neap tides. Two parts of the harbour were then remarkably deep; the one called *Fieln's Road*, at the end of the west channel; and the other *Ferrier's Road*, at the end of the east channel; and both of them three and half fathoms at low water. The tides too were then so strong as to make it necessary to use stream cables to moor the ships. *Guybon Goddard*, Esq, a former Recorder of Lynn (and brother in law to Sir Wm. Dugdale) who died about 1677, says, that at the World's End in the Harbour of Lynn, there was not in any man's remembrance less than ten or eleven feet at low water; and at a place called the *Mayor's Fleet* 8 or 9 feet. The chan-

nel to seaward, below the haven, he says, near half a mile wide at low water, was yet of a depth sufficient for a Ship of 12 foot water to be brought up in any one tide without wind. \* Upon the whole, it appears that the state of Lynn Harbour, and of the rivers which discharge themselves that way, was before the erection of the Sluices much superior to what it has been since. †

As to the State of the Ouse and the other rivers up in the country above Lynn, it seems to have been much better before the undertaking for a general drainage and erection of the Sluices than since that period, as appears from the views of the Sewers taken June 25, 1605, by Sir Robert Bevill, Sir John Peyton, &c. at Salters Lode, where the Nene falls into the Ouse. The commissioners declared the fall from the soil of the Fens to low water mark as no less than ten feet, beside the natural descent of the grounds from the uplands of Huntingdonshire thither; which shews the bottom of the Ouse to be there much deeper then than it was afterward. *Dugdale* also, in his History of Embanking, says, that at Salter's Lode there was ten feet fall of the fens at low water mark.

\* Badeslade p. 12.

† In 1645, five or six years before Denver Sluice was erected, Lynn Haven was in a very good condition. It had two channels, one called the *East*, the other the *West Channel*, in which the biggest ships, drawing 13 or 14 feet water, sailed up and down on the neap as on the spring tides. One John Attleson, aged 80, deposed that for 60 years and upwards, he had known the river Ouse, and all the rivers falling into the same; and that before the erection of the sluices near Salter's Lode, all the rivers were free and open, and received such quantities of water by the flood from sea, that large barges with from 26 to 30 chalders did constantly pass with great ease up to Cambridge town.—See Badeslade: also Elstobb's Observations, p. 23, 24.



From these statements it must necessarily follow, that the lands in the South Level, though unembanked, must in general have been in a comparatively good condition before the undertaking for a general drainage and erection of the Sluices; for, the fall being so great, no water could lie long upon them; and if at any time, by the descent of the upland waters, they became overflowed, they would not long continue in that state. At present, the case, it seems, is very different.

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SECTION, V. *Of the Eabrink Cut, and other projects of former times—with some slight hints on the comparative state of the Shipping—Commercial consequence and population of Lynn at different periods.*

It seems allowed on all hands that Lynn Harbour has grown much worse in the memory of the present inhabitants, and that it is daily getting more and more so. To remedy this growing and alarming evil, as well as to promote and facilitate the inland navigation and drainage of the Fen Districts, a project was formed some few years ago to open a straight cut from Eabrink, about three miles above the town, into the upper part of the said harbour, with the view of scouring, deepening, and improving the same; and an Act of Parliament was obtained for that purpose. The work however, has been hitherto postponed: it being, it seems, found difficult to raise a fund adequate to the occasion. Vast benefits are

said to be confidently expected by many from the execution of this project; while others appear much less sanguine in their expectations, and even consider it as in no small degree dubious and problematical.

The opening a straight cut from Eabrink to Lynn Haven is not indeed, properly speaking, a new or a late project. It was suggested and recommended many years ago, as a part of a far more extensive undertaking, by Mr *Kinderley*, who wrote a large pamphlet on the subject, the second and last edition of which was published in 1751. —His favourite scheme was to continue the Cut from Lynn, through the marshes below the *Wottons*, *Babingley* and *Wolverton*, into what is called the *Old Road*; and to bring the Wisbeach river from the mouth of the *Shiredam* across Marshland into Lynn Harbour. The Welland also or Spalding river, he proposed to conduct by another cut to Boston, there to join the Witham, and pass along with it to the sea by a new outlet, so that there might be but *two outlets* instead of *four*, for all the great Fen rivers. The accomplishment of this vast plan, as he imagined, would not fail of being productive of many and most important benefits:—The harbours of Lynn and Boston, of course, would become more accessible, and be otherwise greatly improved:—The two washes would inevitably and soon be filled up, by the abundance of silt and mud which the tides would lodge there, and which would shortly be converted into firm and fertile land.—Also an extensive district larger than all Marshland, and almost as large as the whole county of *Rutland*, and of far



greater value, would in no very long time be gained from the sea, and brought into a condition to be effectually secured by embankments from any future annoyance from the briny element.—Moreover, a good turnpike road, straight as an arrow, might and would be made across this recovered country, all the way from Lynn to Boston, to the no small convenience and comfort of travellers, (as the obstructions and dangers of the *Washes* would no longer exist) and to the facilitating and perpetuating a safe and easy intercourse between the inhabitants of Lincolnshire, as well as of all the north of England and those of Norfolk, Suffolk and the whole eastern coast of the Kingdom. The scheme or project, however, was not adopted, nor perhaps ever sufficiently attended to; and it may not now be worth while to inquire into the cause of its miscarriage or rejection. Whether this same scheme shall hereafter be ever adopted, executed, or realized, no mortal at present is capable of divining.

Between Mr Kinderley and Mr Badeslade there seems to have existed a considerable difference of opinion on some points. The former ascribed the increasing foulness and decay of Lynn Harbour to the increasing width of the channel below, the loose and light nature of the sand there, subject to the powerful action of the tides, continually driving up those sands and lodging them in the harbour and river above: whereas the latter seems to ascribe it chiefly, if not solely to the Sluices, or the obstruction which they occasioned to the free influx and

efflux of the waters . \* Each writer supports his own opinion with great confidence; but the question remains undecided. Both of them, perhaps, might be right in many or most of their ideas and reasonings.

Very unlike most other great Sea-port towns, whose shipping and trade have vastly increased within the last hundred years, Lynn appears to have remained, in a great measure, stationary. As long ago as 1654 we hear of *fourscore* vessels or more belonging to the port of Lynn, (some of them drawing 13 or 14 feet water) and that they used then to make from 15 to 18 Voyages annually to Newcastle, for coals, Salt, &c. Also that Ship-building was at that period very briskly carried on in the town, to keep up the stock. Moreover the number of seamen and watermen, then employed here, is said to amount to, at least, fifteen hundred; and the whole number of inhabitants was probably equal to that of any subsequent period. It seems, indeed, to be now the prevailing opinion, that the present population of Lynn exceeds that of any former time; which yet may be deemed somewhat doubtful, if not quite improbable; especially as it is known to have been formerly a *manufacturing* town, ‡ which is not its case at present. The

\* Armstrong, it seems, ascribed the silting of Lynn Haven, and of the river above, to the hundredfoot drain.—See Kinderley p. 29.

‡ Hence we hear of manufacturers of Bays, Dyers, Dyehouses, Ful-ling-mills, Button-makers, and worsted-weavers at Lynn, with some thousands employed in knitting stockings, &c.—In behalf of the latter, a petition against the worsted-weavers was presented to parliament in 1689.—See Town Book, No. 10.—Mackerell, about 70 years ago, makes the population of Lynn to amount to upwards of 20,000:—if his estimate was right, even within 5 or 6,000, (and he published



point, however, may not now be very easy to determine. But it seems very evident, that the trade of Lynn has not increased to the degree or extent that might have been expected, from the great opulence of its merchants and the vast extent of its inland navigation. The real or probable cause of this will not become here the subject of enquiry; but it may not be unworthy of investigation.

it under the auspices of the Corporation) the town must have been far more populous than it is at present. See Mackerell, p. 93. —From the great, and increasing number of empty houses now in the town, it may be concluded, that its population is at this time decreasing. The rapid decay of trade, the prospect of an endless war, and the daily increase of the public burdens, are doubtless among the causes of this depopulation. Neither the *paving*, nor yet the *new poor's rate laws*, are likely to realize the vast benefits promised or held out by the promoters of them, and fondly expected by many of the inhabitants. On the contrary, those very Acts are said to be severely felt by a large portion of the householders, many of whom, it seems, have already broken up housekeeping, and many more are expected to take the same course. Upon the whole, it does not seem to appear, either from the Registers of Births and Burials, or from any other known circumstances or sources of information, that the population of Lynn, within the last twenty or thirty years (as generally supposed) has exceeded that of former periods. This subject, however, shall be reserved for future consideration.

## CHAP. II.



Of Marshland and the adjoining parts, or Great Fen Country.—  
View of their situation and revolutions in remote ages, or Sketch of  
their ancient history.

SECTION II. *Account of their state before and after  
the arrival of the Romans—Character of that people—  
establishment of their power here—improvements made  
by them in these parts.*

AS Lynn may be considered as the Capital or Metro-  
polis of Marshland and the Fens, it will not be improper  
to give here some account of those remarkable districts  
from the earliest times. All this flat and level country is  
thought to have been originally a vast forest, which  
was afterwards in some measure cleared, and converted  
into good cultivated land, fertile fields, rich pastures,  
and numerous habitations of industrious men. After that  
however, it was, it seems, for no short period, cover-  
ed by the sea, occasioned, perhaps, by an earthquake,  
or some such convulsive event, which might consider-  
ably lower or sink the whole surface of the country, and  
so make way for the violent influx of the ocean. The  
overflowing waters in time gradually covering the ori-  
ginal surface of the ground with silt and sand to a very



great depth, or rather height, would at last recede. The present face of the country, composed of silt to a vast depth, (and which seems no other than marine sediment) confirms this hypothesis. Still however the parts next the sea, such as Marshland and the low-lands on the eastern side of Lincolnshire would remain as a great salt marsh, occasionally overflowed, especially at spring-tides.—This seems to have been the case when *Julius Cæsar* invaded this country, and when *Claudius* afterwards reduced it to the state of a Roman Province.

The Romans, with all their faults, were certainly a wonderful people. Like all other invaders and conquerors they were in general very hard masters, and in some respects most vile oppressors and tyrants. In other respects, however, they may be said to have been eventually real benefactors to many, if not to most of the countries and nations which they subdued, as they were the means of greatly improving those countries, and of introducing among their inhabitants the rudiments of useful knowledge, habits of industry, and the laws of civilization.

Julius Cæsar's invasion of Britain seems to have proved upon the whole unsuccessful; for he withdrew to the continent, without being able to effect its subjugation, or to retain the conquests which he is supposed to have made; which may be thought to furnish a pretty strong argument in favour of the independent spirit, and high military character of the British nation at that time. Nor does it appear that the Romans ever attempted to give

our ancestors any further disturbance afterward, till the reign of Claudius, whose general, *Aulus Plautius*, a person of senatorial dignity, was the first that established the power of that people, or gave them a firm footing in this island. This was near a hundred years after the retreat or departure of Julius Cæsar; and the success of Plautius is said to have been chiefly or greatly owing to the bitter dissensions which then raged among the British chieftains, some of whom had invited the Romans hither, and afterward joined them against their own country-men. Claudius himself came over sometime after, and completed the conquest of a great part of South Britain, including, it seems, the country of the *Iceni*, which comprehended the present counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, with most, if not the whole of those of Cambridge and Huntingdon, and probably some part of Lincolnshire. So that the parts adjoining the Fens became subject to the Romans among their earliest acquisitions in Britain. The inhabitants of these parts are also said to have made the least resistance to them, at first, of any of the British States, and therefore to have been for sometime more highly favoured by them than any of the rest. Claudius at his departure from this island, which is said to have been in the year 43 of the Christian Era, left here a considerable force under Plautius, Vespasian (afterwards emperor) and other experienced and able Generals, who were succeeded by others, no way their inferiors, in experience, ability, or military fame; among whom were Ostorius Scapula, Suetonius Paulinus, and Julius Agricola. Besides Julius Cæsar, Claudius, and Vespasian, several others of the Roman



emperors are said to have spent some part of their time in this island; and particular Hadrian, Severus, Constantius Chlorus, and his son Constantine the Great. The latter is supposed to have been born here, and his mother is said to have been a Briton. His father, as well as his predecessor Severus, died at York, a place of no small consequence and celebrity in those times.

After the country was reduced, and made a part or province of the empire, the Romans soon began to view it as a very important acquisition. Accordingly they set in good earnest about improving it; and there are still to be seen numerous proofs and monuments of their laborious, ingenious, and successful exertions. Among their important improvements here were included the draining of the Fens, and the embanking of the Marshes, to secure them against the violence and destructive inroads of the ocean. Marshland and the low lands of Lincolnshire, as was before observed, they found in the miserable condition of a salt marsh, occasionally and frequently overflowed by the tides. This country they secured by very strong and extensive embankments, which bear their name to this day. \*

These improvements in the Fens and Marshes are said to have been the works of a colony of foreigners, † brought over, probably, from Belgium, a country of a similar description, whose natives, from their previous knowledge and habits, would be eminently fitted for

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\* They are still called, *The Roman Banks*.

† See Badeslade, p. 15.

such employments. Not that those works can be supposed to have been effected without the powerful co-operation of the native Britons, who would sometimes loudly complain of the hardships they endured in labours of this kind, imposed upon them by the Romans: a plain proof that they bore their full share of them. *Catus Decianus*; it seems, was the name of the Roman officer who had the chief direction or superintendence of the improvements then projected and carried on in the Fens. \* He was probably the first Roman Procurator of the province of the Iceni, and continued to be so for many years. Some things recorded of him, during his government here exhibit him in a very unamiable and detestable light; and it may be presumed that he was an unfeeling and severe task-master to the workmen whom he employed in the fens and marshes, as well as elsewhere; so that we need not wonder that they should sometimes loudly complain of the hardships they underwent. The public works of which he had the direction and superintendence seem, however, to have been carried on by him with no small energy and effect, and to have been soon brought to a state of considerable forwardness and perfection.

The Fens must have been in a very dismal state before the arrival of the Romans; and their exertions, undoubtedly, wrought a mighty and most happy change in the face of the country. Houses, villages, and towns would now appear in places that were before perfectly desolate and dreary. At this period we may venture to

\* See Carte's History of England, vol. 1, p. 115, 119, 122.



date the origin of Lynn; for it may be pretty safely concluded that it owes its rise to the schemes formed by the Romans for the recovery and improvement of these fens and marshes. It is also very probable, not only that it was the first town built in these parts, on that occasion, but also that it was built and inhabited by those foreign colonists above mentioned, and derived its name from them. This however is not the proper place for the further elucidation of this point: our present business being with the history of the Fens.

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SECTION II. *Further strictures on the ancient state of this country, and on a wonderful change it appears to have undergone, at a very remote and unknown period; from De Serra's account of a submarine Forest on the coast of Lincolnshire.*

SOME very remote ages ago, the land, it seems, extended much further out on the Lincolnshire coast than it does at present; and it appears that whole forests once existed in places now wholly occupied by the ocean; which must tend to corroborate what has been already suggested, that the whole face of the fens was originally a forest. A remarkable Paper, giving an account of a *Submarine Forest* on the said coast, appeared in the *Philosophical Transactions* for 1799. Part I. written by Joseph Correa De Serra L. L. D. F. R. S. and A. S. in which the Author informs us of a report in Lincolnshire, that a large extent of islets of moor,

situated along the coast, and visible only in the lowest ebbs of the year, was chiefly composed of decayed trees. That report induced him to take a journey thither for the purpose of inspecting so singular a curiosity. Those islets, he observes, are marked in *Mitchell's Chart* of that coast by the name of *Clay huts*; and the Village of *Huttoft*, opposite to which they principally lie, he supposes to have derived its name from them. "In the Month of September 1796, (says he) I went to Sutton, on the coast of Lincolnshire, in the company of the right honourable the President of the Royal Society, in order to examine their nature and extent. The 19th of the month being the day after the equinoctial full moon, when the lowest ebbs were to be expected, we went in a boat, about half past twelve at noon, and soon set foot on one of the largest islands then appearing. Its exposed surface was about 30 yards long, and 25 wide when the tide was at the lowest. A great number of smaller islets were visible around us to the eastward and southward; and the fishermen whose authority in this point is very competent, say that similar moors are to be found along the whole coast from Skégness to Grimsby, particularly off Addlethorpe and Mablethorpe. The channels dividing the islets were, at the time we saw them, wide and of various depths; the islets themselves ranging generally from east to west in their largest dimensions."

"We visited them again in the ebbs of the 20th and 21st.; and though it did not generally ebb so far as we expected, we could notwithstanding ascertain that they consisted almost entirely of roots, trunks, branches, and



leaves of trees and shrubs, intermixed with some leaves of aquatic plants. The remains of some of these trees were still standing on their roots, while the trunks of the greater part lay scattered on the ground in every possible direction. The barks of trees and roots appeared generally as fresh as when they were growing; in that of the branches particularly, of which a great quantity was found, even the thin silver membranes of outer skin were discernible. The timber of all kinds on the contrary, was decomposed, and soft in the greatest part of the trees: in some, however, it was firm, especially in the roots. The people of the country have often found among them very sound pieces of timber, fit to be employed for several economical purposes. The sorts of wood which are still distinguishable are, birch, fir, and oak. Other woods evidently exist in these islets, of some of which we found the leaves in the soil; but our present knowledge of the comparative anatomy of timber is not so far advanced as to afford us the means of pronouncing with confidence respecting their species. In general the trunks, branches, and roots of the decayed trees were considerably flattened, which is a phenomenon observed in the *Surtarbrand*, or fossil wood of Iceland, and which Scheuchzer remarked also in the fossil wood found in the neighbourhood of the lake Thun in Switzerland."

"The soil to which the trees are fixed, and in which they grew, is a soft greasy clay; but for many inches above the surface, the soil is composed of rotten leaves, scarcely distinguishable to the eye, many of which may

be separated by putting the soil in water and dexterously and patiently using the Spatula, or blunt knife. By this method I obtained some imperfect leaves of the *Ilex aquifolium*, which are now in the Herbarium of the right honourable Sir Joseph Banks; and some other leaves, though less perfect, seem to belong to some species of willow. In this stratum of rotten leaves we could also distinguish some roots of *Arundo Phragmites*."

"These islets, according to the most accurate information, extend at least twelve miles in length, and about a mile in breadth, opposite to Sutton shore. The water without them toward the sea, generally deepens suddenly, so as to form a steep bank. The channels between the several islets, when the islets are dry, in the lowest ebbs of the year, are from four to twelve feet deep: their bottoms are clay or sand, and their direction is generally from east to west."

A well, dug at Sutton by Joshua Searby, shews that a moor of the same nature is found under ground in that part of the country, at the depth of sixteen feet, consequently very nearly on the same level with that which constitutes the islets. The disposition of the strata was found to be nearly as follows: clay sixteen feet; moor, similar to that of the islets, three or four ditto; soft moor, like the scourings of a ditch bottom, mixed with shells and silt, twenty feet; marly clay, one foot; chalky rock, from one to two feet; clay, thirty-one yards; gravel and water; the water has a chalybeate taste. In order to ascertain the course of this subterra-



neous stratum of decayed vegetables, Sir Joseph Banks directed a boring to be made in the fields belonging to the royal Society in the parish of Mablethorpe. Moor of a similar nature to that of Searby's well, and the islets, was found very nearly on the same level, about four feet thick, and under a soft clay."

"The whole appearance of the rotten vegetables we observed, perfectly resembles, according to the remark of Sir Joseph Banks, the moor which, in Blakeney Fen, and in other parts of the East Fen in Lincolnshire, is thrown up in the making of banks; barks like those of the birch-tree being there also abundantly found. The moor extends over all the Lincolnshire fens, and has been traced as far as Peterborough, more than sixty miles to the south of Sutton. On the north side, according to the fishermen, the moory islets extend as far as Grimsby, situated on the south side of the Humber: and it is a remarkable circumstance, that in the large tracts of low land which lie on the south banks of that river, a little above its mouth, there is a subterraneous stratum of decayed trees and shrubs, exactly like those we have observed at Sutton; particularly at Axolme isle, a tract of ten miles in length by five in breadth; and at Hatfield chace, which comprehends 180,000 acres. Dugdale had long ago made this observation in the first of these places; and Dela Prime in the second. The roots are there likewise standing in the places where they grew: the trunks lie prostrate. The woods are of the same species as at Sutton. Roots of aquatic plants and reeds

are likewise mixed with them ; and they are covered by a stratum of some yards of soil, the thickness of which, though not ascertained with exactness by the above-mentioned observers, we may easily conceive to correspond with what covers the stratum of decayed wood at Sutton, by the circumstances of the roots being (according to Mr. Richardson's observations) only visible when the water is low, where a channel was cut which has left them uncovered."

"Little doubt can be entertained of the moory islets of Sutton being a part of this extensive and subterraneous stratum, which, by some inroad of the sea, has there been stripped of its covering of soil. The identity of the levels; that of the species of trees; the roots of these affixed in both to the soil where they grew; and above all, the flattened shape of the trunks, branches, and roots, found in the islets (which can only be accounted for by the heavy pressure of a superinduced stratum) are sufficient reasons for this opinion."

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SECTION III. *Further observations from the same Paper—Epoch of the destruction of the said Forest—Agency by which it was effected, &c.—Similar appearances eastward along the Norfolk coast.*

"Such a wide-spread assemblage of vegetable ruins, lying almost in the same level, and that level generally under the common mark of low water, must naturally strike the observer, and give birth to the following ques-



- tions: 1. What is the epoch of this destruction?  
2. By what agency was it effected?

In answer to these questions I will venture to submit the following reflections: The fossil remains of vegetables hitherto dug up in so many parts of the globe, are, on a close inspection, found to belong to two different states of our planet. The parts of vegetables and their impressions, found in mountains, of a colaceous and schistous, or even sometimes of a calcareous nature, are chiefly of plants now existing between the tropics, which would neither have grown in the latitudes in which they are dug up, nor have been carried and deposited there by any of the acting forces under the present constitution of nature. The formation indeed of the very mountains in which they are buried, and the nature and position of the materials which compose them, are such as we cannot account for by any actions and re-actions which in the actual state of things take place on the surface of the earth. We must necessarily recur to that period in the history of our planet, when the surface of the ocean was at least so much above its present level as to cover even the summits of those secondary mountains which contain the remains of tropical plants. The changes which these vegetables have suffered in their substance is almost total; they commonly retain only the external configuration of what they were. Such is the state in which they are found in England by Lhwyd; in France by Jussieu; and in the Netherlands by Burtin; not to mention instances in more distant countries. Some of the impressions or remains of plants

found in soils of this nature which were, by the more ancient and enlightened oryctologists, supposed to belong to plants actually growing in temperate and cold climates, seem, on accurate investigation, to have been part of exotic vegetables. In fact, whether we suppose them to have grown near the spot where they are found, or to have been carried thither from different parts by the force of an impelling flood, it is equally difficult to conceive how organized beings, which, in order to live, require such a vast difference in temperature and seasons, could live on the same spot, or how their remains could (from climates so widely distant) be brought together in the place by one common dislocating cause. To this ancient order of fossil vegetables belong whatever retains a vegetable shape found in or near coalmines, and (to judge from the places where they have been found) the greater part of the agatized woods. But from the species and state of the trees which are the subject of this memoir, and from the situation and nature of the soil in which they are found, it seems very clear that they do not belong to the primeval order of vegetable ruins."

"The second order of fossil vegetables comprehend those which are found in the strata of clay or sand; materials which are the result of slow depositions of the sea and of rivers, agents still at work under the present constitution of our planet. These vegetable remains are found in such flat countries as may be considered to be a new formation, The vegetable organization still subsists, at least in part; and their vegetable substance has suffered a change only in colour, smell, or consistence; altera-



tions which are produced by the development of their oily and bitumenous parts, or by their natural progress towards rottenness. Such are the fossil vegetables found in Cornwall by Borlase; in Essex, by Derham; in Yorkshire by Dela Prime and Richardson; and in foreign countries by other naturalists. These vegetables are found at different depths; some of them much below the present level of the sea, but in clayey and sandy strata (evidently belonging to modern formation); and have, no doubt, been carried from their original place and deposited there by the force of great rivers or currents, as it has been observed with respect to the Mississippi. In many instances, however, these trees and shrubs are found standing on their roots, and generally in low or marshy places above, or very little below the level of the sea."

"To this last description of fossil vegetables the decayed trees here described certainly belong. They have not been transported by currents or rivers; but though standing in their native soil, we cannot suppose the level in which they are found to be the same as that in which they grew. It would be impossible for any of these trees or shrubs to vegetate so near the sea, and below the common level of its water. The waves would cover such tracts of land, and hinder any vegetation. We cannot conceive that the surface of the ocean has ever been any lower than it is now; on the contrary we are led, by numberless phenomena to believe that the level of the water in our globe is now below what it was in former periods. We must therefore conclude, that the forest here described grew in a level high enough to per-

mit its vegetation; and that the force (whatever it was) which destroyed it, lowered the level of the ground where it stood.“

“There is a force of subsidence (particularly in soft ground) which being a natural consequence of gravity, slowly, though imperceptibly operating, has its action sometimes quickened and rendered sudden by extraneous causes; for instance, by earthquakes. The slow effects of this force of subsidence have been accurately remarked in many places; examples also of its sudden action are recorded in almost every history of great earthquakes.—In England, Borlase has given in the *Philosophical Transactions* a curious observation of a subsidence of at least sixteen feet in the ground between Sampson and Trecaw islands in Scilly. The soft and low grounds between the towns of Thorne and Gowle in Yorkshire, a space of many miles, has so much subsided in latter times, that some old men of Thorne affirmed, “that whereas they could before see little of the Steeples (of Gowle) they now see the church yard wall.” The instances of similar subsidence which might be mentioned, are innumerable.

“The force of subsidence, suddenly acting by means of some earthquake, seems to me the most probable cause to which the usual submarine situation of the forest we are speaking of may be ascribed. It affords a simple easy explanation of the matter; its probability is supported by numberless instances of similar events; and it is not liable to the strong objections which exist against the hypothesis of the ultimate depression and ele-



vation of the level of the ocean; an opinion which, to be credible, requires the support of a great number of proofs less equivocal than those which have hitherto been urged in its favour, even by the genius of Lavoisier."

"The stratum of soil sixteen feet thick, placed above the decayed trees, seems to remove the epoch of their sinking and destruction far beyond the reach of any historical knowledge. In Caesar's time the level of the north sea appears to have been the same as in our days. He mentions the separation of the Wahal branch of the Rhine, and its junction with the Meuse; noticing the then existing distance from that junction to the sea, which agrees according to D'Anville's inquiries, with the actual distance. Some of the Roman roads, constructed according to the order of Augustus, under Agrippa's administration, leading to the maritime towns of Belgium, still exist, and reach the present shore. The description which Roman authors have given of the coast, ports, and mouths of rivers, on both sides of the North sea, agree in general with their present state; except in places ravaged by the inroads of this sea, more apt from its force to destroy the surrounding countries than to increase them."

"An exact resemblance exists between maritime Flanders and the opposite coast of England, both in point of elevation above the sea, and of the internal structure and arrangement of the soils. On both sides strata of clay, silt, and sand, (often mixed with decayed vegetables) are found near the surface; and in both, these

superior materials cover a very deep stratum of blueish or dark coloured clay, unmixed with extraneous bodies. On both sides they are the lowermost part of the soil, existing between two ridges of high lands, on their respective sides of the same narrow sea. These two countries are certainly coeval; and whatever proves that maritime Flanders has been for many ages out of the sea, must, in my opinion, prove also that the forest we are speaking of was long before that time destroyed and buried under a stratum of soil. Now it seems proved from historical records, carefully collected by several learned members of the Brussels Academy, that no material change has happened in the lowermost part of maritime Flanders during the period of the last two thousand years."

"I am therefore inclined to suppose the original catastrophe which buried this forest to be of very ancient date; but I suspect the inroad of the sea which uncovered the decayed trees of the islands of Sutton, to be comparatively recent. The state of the leaves and of the timber, and also the tradition of the neighbouring people concur to strengthen this suspicion." — The reader, it is hoped, will excuse, and even approve the length of this curious extract, as it seems so well calculated to account for and elucidate divers striking phenomena in the natural history of the Fens.

Here it may not be improper further to observe, that the forest above described seems to have extended from the coast of Lincolnshire a considerable way along the Norfolk coast; as there is on the shore, near Thornham



in that county, at low water, the appearance of a large forest having been, at some period, interred and swallowed up by the waves. Stools of numerous large timber trees, and many trunks, are to be seen, but so rotten, that they may be penetrated by a spade. These lie in a black mass of vegetable fibres, consisting of decayed branches, leaves, rushes, flags, &c. The extent of this once sylvan tract [on the Norfolk coast] must have been great, from what is discoverable; and at high water, now covered by the tides, is in one spot from five to six-hundred acres. No hint of the manner, or the time, in which this submersion happened, can be traced. Nothing like a bog is near, and the whole beach besides is composed of a fine ooze, or marine clay. \*

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SECTION IV. *Some further geological observations relating to the Fens, extracted from Dugdale's Letters to Sir Thomas Browne.*

The fullest and most circumstantial account we have of these Fens is contained in Sir William Dugdale's History of Embanking, the substance of which will be found in the following pages. He has also treated upon the same subject in his correspondence with his friend Sir Thomas Browne, published in the posthumous works of the latter; some extracts from which, being much to

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\* Philosophical Transactions, No. 481—also Beauties of England, volume XI, p. 94.

the purpose, shall be here submitted to the reader's perusal.

In Letter IV, he says to his friend, "I shall here acquaint you with my conceit touching the spacious tract, in form of a sinus, or bay, which we call the great level of the fens; extending from Lynn beyond Waynfleet in Lincolnshire in length; and in breadth into some parts of the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge, Huntingdon, Northampton, and Lincoln: intreating your opinion therein. That it was at first firm land I am induced to believe, when I consider the multitude of trees (fir, oak, and other kinds) found in those drains and diggings which have of late years been made there." After mentioning some instances, he adds—"Mr Goddard, Recorder of Lynn, assures me that lately in Marshland, about a mile from Magdalen Bridge, about seventeen feet deep (upon occasion of letting down a sluice) were found below the silt (for of that sort is all Marshland and Holland) in very firm earth, furze bushes, as they grew, not rotted; and nut trees, with nuts, not perished; neither of which kind of bushes or trees are now growing upon that silty soil of Marshland, though it be fruitful and rich for other vegetables." —Afterward he adds, I shall tell you how I conclude it became a fen by the stagnation of the fresh waters; which is thus—The sea having its passage upon the ebbs and flows thereof along the coast of Norfolk to the coast of Lincolnshire, did in time, by reason of its muddiness, leave a shelf of silt betwixt those two points of land, viz: Rising in Norfolk, and the country about Spilsby in Lincolnshire,



which shelf increasing in height and length so much, as that the ordinary tides did not overflow it, was by that check of those fluxes, in time, so much augmented in breadth, that the Romans finding it considerable for the fertility of the soil, made the first Sea-banks for its preservation from the Spring-tides, which might otherwise overflow it. And now, Sir, by this settling of the silt, the soil of Marshland and Holland had its first beginning. By the like excess of silt brought into the mouths of these rivers, which had their outfalls at Lynn, Wisbeach, and Boston, where the fresh water is so stopped, as that the ordinary land floods, being not of force enough to grind it out (as the term is) all the level behind became overflowed; and as an ordinary pond gathereth mud, so did this do more, which in time hath increased to such thickness, that since the *Po-dike* was made to keep up the fresh water from drowning Marshland on the other side, and South Eau-Bank for the preservation of Holland from the like inundation, the level of the Fenn is become four feet higher than the level of Marshland, as Mr Vermuiden assured me upon a view and observation thereof."—Afterward he observes, That the time when the passage of Wisbeach was so silted up, as that the outfall of the great river Ouse, which was there, became altered, and was diverted to Lynn, was in Henry the third's reign, as my testimonies (says he) from records manifest. "

In his 5th Letter he says to his friend—"Since I wrote to you for your opinion touching the various course

of the sea, I met with some notable instances of that kind in a late author, viz, *Olivarius Uredius*, in his History of Flanders; which he manifesteth to be occasioned from *Earthquakes*."—And this appears to have become afterward our author's own settled opinion, as to the ancient influx of the sea over this great level country.

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SECTION V. *A concise view of the ancient and modern history of the Fen Country, from Pennant's Preface to his third volume of Arctic Zoology.*

Among the modern authors who have treated of these Fens, no one, perhaps, ranks higher than Pennant. Of this singular tract of country he gives the following account.

“The great Level, which comprehends Holland in this county, [Lincolnshire] with part of Northamptonshire, Huntingdonshire, Cambridgeshire, Suffolk and Norfolk, a tract of sixty computed miles in length, and forty in breadth, had been originally a wooded country. Whole forests of firs and oaks have been found in digging, far beneath the moor on the solid ground; oaks fifteen feet in girth, and ten yards long, mostly burnt at the bottoms, the ancient method of falling them: multitudes of others entirely rooted up, as appears, by the force of the sea bursting in and overwhelming this whole tract, and covering it with silt, or mud which it carried with it from time to time.”

6040  
2400



In process of time, this tract underwent another revolution. The silt or mud gained so considerably as to leave vast spaces dry, and other parts so shallow, as to encourage the Romans to gain these fertilized countries from the sea. These sensible and indefatigable people first taught us the art of embanking, and recovered the valuable lands we now possess. It was the complaint of *Galgacus*, that they exhausted the strength of the Britons, *in sylvis et paludibus emuniendis*, \* in clearing woods and draining marshes."

"After the Romans deserted our island, another change took place. Neglect of their labours succeeded: the drains were no longer kept open, and the whole became fen and shallow lake, resembling the present east fen; the haunt of myriads of water fowl, or the retreat of banditti. Ely and many little tracts, which had the advantage of elevation, were at that period literally islands. Several of these in early times, became the retreat of the religious. Ely, Thorney, Ramsey, Spiney and others rose into celebrated Abbeys, and by the industry of their inhabitants first began to restore the works of the Romans. The country above Thorney, is represented by an old historian [*William of Malmsbury*] as a paradise. Constant visitations, founded on wholesome laws, preserved this vast recovered country; but on the rapid and rapacious dissolution, the removal of several of the inhabitants, and the neglect of the laws of *sewers*, the drains were filled, the cultivated lands overflowed, and the country, again reduced to a useless morass." †

\* *Vita Agricola*.— † Compare Dugdale's maps of this tract in its morassy and improved states p. 375, 416.

In the 20th. of Elizabeth, the state of the country was taken into consideration : ‡ no great matters were done till the time of Francis, and William his son, earls of Bedford, who attempted this Herculean work, and reclaimed this vast tract of more than 300,000 acres ; and the last received, under the sanction of Parliament, the just reward of 90,000 acres. I speak not of the reliques of ancient banks, which I have seen in Holland in Lincolnshire, now remote from the sea, nor yet the Roman timuli, the coins and other evidences of the residence of that nation in these parts : it is to be hoped that will be undertaken by the pen of some native, who will perform it from actual survey.

“The vast fenny tracts of these countries were in old times the haunts of multitudes of water fowl, but the happy change, by attention to draining, has substituted in their place thousands of sheep ; or, instead of reeds, made those tracts laugh with corn. The *Crane*, which once abounded in these parts, has even deserted our island. The common *wild duck* still breeds in multitudes in the unreclaimed parts ; and thousands are sent annually to the London markets, from the numerous *Decoys*. The *Grey lag Goose*, the origin of the tame, breeds here, and is resident the whole year. A few others of the duck kind breed here. *Lapwings*, *Red-breasted Godwits*, and *Whimbrels* are found here during summer ; but with their young in autumn disperse about the island. The *Short-eared Owl* migrates here with the *Woodcock*, and is a welcome guest to the farmer, by

‡ History of Embanking.



clearing the fields of mice. *Knots* swarm on the coast in winter : are taken in numbers in nets : yet none are seen during summer. The most distant north is probably the retreat of the multitude of water-fowl of each order which stock our shores, driven southward by the extreme cold : most of them regularly, others whose nature enables them to brave the usual winters of the frigid zone, are with us only accidental guests, and in seasons when the frost rages in their native land with unusual severity."

"In the latitude of Boston, or about latitude 53, the following remark may be made on the vegetable creation: a line may be drawn to the opposite part of the kingdom, which will comprehend the greatest part of Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, the moorlands of Staffordshire, all Cheshire, Flintshire, Denbighshire, Caernarvonshire, and Anglesey. Beyond this line, nature hath allotted to the northern parts of these kingdoms certain plants which are rarely or never found to transgress that line to the south."—In another place he says,

"From Hulm, the northern promontory of Norfolk, the sea advances deeply westward, and forms the great bay called *The Washes*, filled with vast sand banks, the summits of which are dry at low water; but the intervening channels are the means of prodigious commerce to Lynn, seated on the Ouse, which is circulated into the very inland parts of our Island, through the various rivers which fall into its long course. Lynn is mentioned in the *Domesday book*, but became considera-

ble for its commerce with Norway, as early as the year 1284.

“The opposite shore is that of Lincolnshire. Its great commercial town Boston stands on the Witham, a few miles from the head of the bay. Spring tides rise at the Key fourteen-feet, and convey there vessels of above a hundred tons; but greater ships lie at the scap, the opening of the Estuary.—The sluggish rivers of these tame tracts want force to form a depth of Water.

“Lincolnshire and part of six other counties are the *pais bas*, the *Low countries* [or *Netherlands*] of Britain. This very extensive tract, from the scap to the northern head land, opposite to Hull, presents to the Sea a bow-like and almost unindented front; and so low as to be visible from sea only at a small distance, and churches instead of hills are the only land-marks to seamen, among which the beautiful Steeple of Boston is particularly distinguished. The whole Coast is pointed with Salt-marshes or sand hills, and secured by artificial banks. Old *Hollingshed* gives a long list of ports on this now inhospitable coast. *Waynfleet*, once a noted haven, is at present a mere creek. *Skegness*, once a large walled town with a good harbour, is now an inconsiderable place, a mile from the sea: and the port of *Grimsby*, which in the time of Edward III. furnished him with eleven ships, is now totally choked with sand.”

“All these coasts of Lincolnshire are fiat, and have been gained from the sea. *Barton* and *Barrow* have not



at present the least appearance of ports; and yet by Hollingshed were styled good ones. Similar accidents have befallen the low tract of Holderness, which faces the congruent shores. *Hedon*, a few miles below Hull, several hundred years ago a port of great commerce, is now a mile and half from the water, and has long given way to the fortune of the latter (a creation of Edward I in 1296) on account of the excellency of its port. But in return the sea has made ample reprisals on the lands of this Hundred. The site, and even the very names of several places, once towns of note upon the *Humber*, are now only recorded in history; and *Ravenspur* was at one time the rival of Hull, and a port so very considerable in 1332, that Edward Baliol and the confederated English barons sailed from hence with a great fleet to invade Scotland: Henry IV, in 1399 made choice of this port to land at, to effect the deposal of Richard II; yet the whole of it has been long since devoured by the merciless ocean; extensive sands, dry at low water, are to be seen in their stead: except *Sunk Island*, which till about 1666 appeared among them like an elevated shoal, at which period it was regained, by embankments from the sea, and now forms a considerable estate, probably restored to its pristine condition."

SECTION VI. *Further account of the Fens, from the*  
BEAUTIES OF ENGLAND, *and other sources.*

“That this vast level was at first a firm dry land, and not annoyed with any extraordinary inundation by the sea, or stagnation of fresh waters, is evident from the quantity of trees that have been found buried in different parts of the fens, and also from a variety of other circumstances.

“Dugdale, in his *History of Embanking*, observes that in making several channels for draining in the isle of Axholm, great numbers of oak, fir, and other trees were found in the moor. The fir trees lay at the depth of between four and five feet, but the oaks were but little more than three feet beneath the soil. They were discovered lying near their roots, which “still stand as they grew,” that is, in firm earth below the moor, and the bodies, for the most part, northwest from the roots, not cut down with axes, but burnt asunder, somewhat near the ground, as the ends of them, being *coaled*, do manifest. The oaks were lying in multitudes, and of an extraordinary size, being five yards in compass, and sixteen yards long; and some smaller of a greater length, with a good quantity of acorns and small nuts near them.” Similar discoveries have been made in the fen near Thorney; in digging the channel north of Lynn, called Downham Eau; and in many other places.

*Mr Richard Atkins*, a gentleman of considerable research, and a commissioner of sewers in the reign of James I. was of opinion that the Fens were formerly meadow land, fruitful, healthy, and lucrative to the in-



habitants, from affording relief to the people of the high-lands in times of drought. Peterborough, he observes, was of old called Meadhamstead, on account of the meadows there, though most of the present fens belong to that district. Likewise Ely, or Peterborough Great Fen was once a forest.

“In a Paper communicated to the Royal Society by the reverend *John Rastrick* of Lynn, and published in the *Philosophical Transactions* (No. 279, 1702) it is mentioned, that on removing the foundation of the old sluice at the end of Hammond’s Bank, where it falls into Boston Haven, the workmen discovered many roots of trees issuing from their boles, or trunks, spread in the ground; and in taking them up with the earth in which they were embedded, they met with a solid gravelly and stony soil, of the high country kind, but black and discoloured, from the length of years, and the change which had befallen it.

“Mr. *Elstobb*, in his *Historical Account of the Bedford Level*, affirms, that in his perambulations over the levels of Sutton and Mepal, and others adjacent, in the counties of Cambridge and Huntingdon, he observed, at the depth of about three feet under the present moorish soil, multitudes of roots of large trees, standing as they had grown, from which the bodies had manifestly been sawn off. Some of them he saw lying at a small distance from their roots, at the depth above-mentioned; and he was credibly informed that great numbers had been and were still found severed and lying in the same manner.

“He also relates that in driving the piles for securing the foundation of the great sluice at the mouth of the new cut, a little above Boston, in 1764, roots of trees were found at the depth of eighteen feet below the pasturage surface, standing as the trees had grown. Some of them were obliged to be chopt through to make a passage for the piles. In some other parts of the trench dug for laying the same foundations, small shells were discovered, disposed in the same manner as they are often found at the bottom and sides of the marsh creeks.

“The preceding instances are sufficient proofs, that the surface of this level was anciently much lower than it is at present ; \* and also that it must have remained dry for a vast number of years, otherwise the trees would never have attained to the magnitude which they appear to have done by the above statements. In what age, or from what causes the waters overspread the country, and converted this extensive district into fens, is uncertain; yet there are reasons to believe, that the great level would have remained in a flourishing state till the present time, if the operations of nature had not been interrupted by the works of art.

“*Dugdale*, in a quotation from the *Life of Agricola*, by Tacitus, says that “the Britons complained that their hands and bodies were worn out and consumed by

\* No, surely, not sufficient proofs that the surface was lower; but rather, or only, that the country was once dry and woody, and long remained so: for upon the reasonable supposition of an *Earthquake*, as was before repeatedly suggested, the probability would be, that the surface was anciently as high at least, if not higher than at present, but was considerably lowered by that convulsive event, which would make way for the violent bursting in of the sea.



the Romans, in clearing the woods, and embanking the fens." This sentence, when considered conjointly with the foregoing accounts of the state in which the trees have been found, enables us to form an idea of the time when the woods were destroyed, which appears to have been before the Romans had secured the entire possession of the island. Some of the trees, we find, were *burnt*, and others *sawn* down, and this evidently without any regard either to profit or utility, since the trunks were left to perish on the soil where they grew. It is probable therefore, that they were felled to deprive the Britons of shelter, and to enable the Roman soldiers to march in greater security, and obtain an easier conquest.

"The emperor *Scverus* is said to have been the first who intersected the fens with causeways. *Dugdale* has mentioned one, supposed to have been made by him, of twenty-four miles in length, extending from *Denver* to *Peterborough*. This was composed of gravel, about three feet in depth and sixty feet broad, and is covered with moor from three to five feet in thickness. This furnishes another proof of the great alterations which the fens have undergone; yet the changes which have taken place may be illustrated still further.

"The celebrated *Sir Robert Cotton*, when making a pool, at the edge of *Connington Downs*, in *Huntingdonshire*, found the skeleton of a large sea-fish nearly twenty feet long, about six feet below the superficies of the ground, and as much below the general level of the fens. Many of the bones, which from their long continuance in the earth, were incrustated with stone, were preserved,

and are reported to be still in the possession of Sir Robert's descendants.

“At Whittlesea, in digging through the moor, for the purpose of making a moat to secure a plantation of fruit trees, at eight feet deep, a perfect soil was found, with swaths of grass lying on it as they were at first mowed.” This seems to indicate that the inundation which overwhelmed the country, happened in summer, or early in autumn, and had not been foreseen by the inhabitants. The *nuts* and *acorns* before-mentioned, will also corroborate this conjecture, as to the time of the year when this catastrophe happened; and so do the swaths of grass, or mown hay, as to the suddenness of it.

“When the foundation was dug for Shirbeck sluice, near Boston, at the depth of sixteen feet a *smith's forge* was discovered embedded in silt, with all the *tools* belonging to it, several *horse-shoes* and some other articles. Also in setting down a sluice a little below Magdalene Fall, a stone eight feet long and a cart wheel were found at a similar depth below the surface. Likewise near the river Welland, at the depth of ten feet, several boats were dug up; and at the same depth, on the opposite side of the river, the remains of ancient *tan-vats* or pits, and a great quantity of horns were found.”

“*Henry of Huntingdon*, who lived in the reign of king Stephen, describes this fenny country as very pleasant and agreeable to the eye, watered by many rivers which run through it, diversified with many large and



small lakes, and adorned with many woods and islands. *William of Malmsbury* also, who lived till the first year of Henry II, has painted the state of the land round Thorney in the most glowing colours. He represents it as a paradise; the very marshes abounding in trees, whose length, without knots, emulated the stars. The plain there (says he) is as level as the sea, which with the flourishing of the grass allureth the eye; and so smooth that there is nothing to hinder him that runs through it; neither is there any *waste* place in it; for in some parts there are apple trees; in others vines, which either spread upon the grounds, or run along the poles.

Making every allowance for the florid colouring of the above representations, it is manifest that the level in the times of the above writers must have been in a very flourishing and superior condition to what it was a few centuries afterwards, when the fens were covered with water, and the inhabitants of many islands in danger of perishing for want of food." Whatever occasioned the alteration, it clearly appears that attempts at draining were made as early as the reign of Edward I, and have been continued with various success to the present time. The famous *John of Gaunt*, and *Margaret countess of Richmond* were among the first adventurers who embarked in this undertaking. They were pretty soon succeeded by *bishop Morton*, whose patriotic efforts, as has been already observed, were attended with considerable success.

SECTION VII. *Of the Fens from the time of Henry VIII, or rather that of Elizabeth, to the Revolution; giving an account of the different projects of improvement proposed and carried on during that period.*

During the successive reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Mary I, little attention appears to have been paid to the state or improvement of the fens. For most of that time, and ever after the dissolution of the abbeys, to which a very great part of these fens belonged, they were, it seems, almost entirely neglected, and soon reduced to a very wretched condition: so little care having been taken by the new possessors to keep the drains open and the banks in repair, compared with what had been done by their wiser predecessors, the abbots and the monks.

In Elizabeth's time, however, things were gotten to such a pass as not to admit of being any longer overlooked or neglected. The reign of that queen (as Mr Gough observes in his edition of *Camden*) "may be properly fixed on as the period when the Great Level began to become immediately a public care." In her 20th. year a commission was granted to Sir Thomas Cecil, Sir William Fitz-Williams, and others, to drain the fens about *Clow's Cross*; but the inutility of such a partial design appears to have been early foreseen, as there is no account of the plan ever being acted upon. In her 43rd year, an act of parliament was passed on a general plan, which not only included the draining of the great level, but likewise all the marshes and drowned lands in the kingdom. This scheme, for which resources equal to



the extent of the undertaking are said to have been provided, was frustrated by the queen's death.

“In the beginning of the reign of James I, *Sir John Popham*, the Lord Chief Justice, procured an act for draining the fens in the Isle of Ely, and the lands in the adjacent counties. The work was commenced with great spirit, but was soon retarded by the death of Popham, and afterwards entirely dropt, through the opposition of some land-owners, who conceived themselves injured.

“The persons who next attempted to proceed with this important undertaking, were the *Earl of Arundel*, *Sir William Ayloff, bart.* and *Anthony Thomas, Esq.* but their proposals not being agreeable to those who acted as commissioners on behalf of the proprietors, and much time being lost by the meetings held to determine the contested points, the *king* himself resolved to become an adventurer, and actually undertook the herculean labour of draining the fens, on condition of his receiving 120,000 acres, as a remuneration, when the work was completed. This agreement was carried into a law, and there the design terminated; for the political embarrassments, which attended the remainder of the reign of the fickle James, prevented a single step being taken to carry it into execution.

In the 6th year of Charles I. *Sir C. Vermuiden*, a Hollander, in a contract with the Commissioners of Sewers, engaged to drain the fens, on condition, that 90,000

acres of land, when drained, should be transferred to him. But when he had again surveyed the Level, and made drawings of the works that were necessary, he appears to have thought the reward insufficient, and demanded an additional allotment of 5000 acres. This proposal was rejected; more from the prejudices that prevailed against him as a foreigner (and a disgust, probably, for not standing to his first bargain) than from any supposition that his demands were extravagant: for soon after, the commissioners with the consent of the land-holders, engaged on the same terms of 95,000 acres with *Francis Earl of Bedford*, who had large possessions in the fens, through the grant to his ancestors of Thorney Abbey and its appurtenances. \*

\* Of this undertaking *Elstob* gives the following account—That it was entered into by the Earl, at the earnest request and importunities of the country in general, who at a numerous sessions of sewers held at Lynn, January 13, 1630, became humble suitors to him to undertake the business, which he condescended to comply with, and accordingly contracted with the commissioners and the country, and engaged that he would use his best endeavours to *drain* the said *marsh, fenny, waste* and *surrounded grounds*, in such a manner as that they should be fit for *meadow, pasture, or arable*; and the work to be completed within the compass of *six years*. To the end the Earl might the more confidently undertake and effect the said work, and be assured of enjoying the 95,000 acres, as the fruit and recompence of his labours and charge; and that the country might be more assured of obtaining a benefit proportionable to the very great quantity of land they were to part with, it was agreed that 12,000 acres, part of the 95,000, should be presented to the king, in lieu of all and every benefit he might claim by a certain law of sewers, made in the 19th year of king *James*, or by any other law or decree of sewers, and for his royal *approbation* and *confirmation* of the contract, &c.”—Having described the work in its commencement and progress, he adds, that having expended about £100,000 these lands were so benefited that, in about seven years time, from the first undertaking, viz in 1637, at a session of sewers held at Peterborough, October 12, the Level was adjudged to be drained, and the 95,000 acres were, by six or more commissioners set out for the Earl, his heirs and



Before the commencement of the work, thirteen gentlemen, of high rank and respectability offered to become joint adventurers with the earl, and their proposals being accepted, the undertaking commenced. In the year 1634, the king granted the adventurers a charter of incorporation; and three years and a half from that period, the Commissioners adjudged the Level drained, and, accompanied by his Majesty's surveyor, attended to set out the earl's allotment.

From this time the favourable disposition of Charles toward the adventurers began to change; and early in the ensuing year, 1638, a meeting was held at Hunting-

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assigns.—But it being soon after discovered that these lands, though benefited, were not perfectly recovered, but in winter were still subject to inundations, the very next year, 1638, at a sessions of sewers held at Huntingdon, April 12, the Earl's undertaking was adjudged *defective*. The King then taking the business into his princely consideration, and understanding by an estimate made by Sir C. Vermuiden, that if this Level of near 400,000 acres were made *winter-lands*, it would be of extraordinary advantage, viz of about £600,000 to the common wealth, his Majesty determined to become himself the undertaker; and accordingly on July 18, the same year, he was actually declared undertaker; and was to have, not only those 95,000 acres, which had been set out for the Earl of Bedford, but also 57,000 acres more, from the country, it being his Majestys design to make the land good *winter-ground*. The Earl, in consideration of the costs he had been at, was to have 40,000 acres out of the 95,000 before granted him.—The King to manifest his real and earnest purpose of speedily effecting the business, caused the following works to be done: a bank on the south side of Morton's Leam, and another begun on the north side: a navigable sass at Standground: a new river cut between the stone sluice, at the Horse-Shoe, and the sea below Wisbeach, sixty feet broad, and two miles long, with banks on both sides: also a sluice in the marshes below Tydd, upon the outfall of the *Shire Drain*. But the King being embroiled in a civil war, the Level lay neglected; and the country complaining that they had received no benefit by the draining, they entered upon the 95,000 acres again, which had been taken from them." Elstob's Observations, p. 9 to 12.

don, of people devoted to the will of the crown, who were empowered to examine into the utility of the measures executed by the Earl. The new Commissioners declared that the works were incomplete; and accepted the king's proposals to drain the fens, for which he was to receive not only 95,000 acres, but also 57,000 additional! Every hope of advantage which Charles expected to reap from this undertaking was entirely dissipated by the ensuing troubles, which prevented every further prosecution of the work till the year 1649, when *William earl of Bedford*, Son and successor of *Francis*, was restored by the Parliament to all the rights of his father.

The Act obtained at this period, settled the boundaries of the Level, and gave fresh vigour to the undertaking. The works which had fallen to decay, were repaired, and new channels made, with so much propriety in the opinion of the Commissioners, that on the 25th. of March, 1653, the Level was adjudged to be fully drained, and the 95,000 acres awarded to the Earl and his participants; the latter of whom were nearly ruined by the expence of draining, which amounted to upwards of £ 400,000.

In the 15th. of Charles II, the former act was confirmed in its most essential clauses; and a corporation, consisting of a governor, six bailiffs, and twelve conservators and commonality, was established, under the title of "Conservators of the Great Level of the Fens," for its better government. These commissioners were empowered to levy taxes on the 95,000 acres, to defray



whatever expences might arise in their preservation; but only 83,000 acres were vested in the corporation, in trust for the Earl of Bedford and his associates. The remaining 12,000 having been allotted to Charles I, in pursuance of the agreement made by the persons who met at Huntingdon, were now assigned to the king, with the exception of 2000 acres, which had been granted to the Earl of Portland." \*

Though the Corporation were invested with power by the above act to levy taxes generally on the adventurers land, yet as the form and manner in which that power was to be exercised was not prescribed, they could only levy a specific sum on every acre; a proceeding manifestly unjust; as the lands varied so much in value, that an *equal* tax nearly amounted to the whole sum the inferior lands were worth. Application was therefore made to the Legislature for power to remedy this inconvenience, by granting authority to substitute a gradual acre tax; and commissioners were appointed by the Parliament to survey and rate the land according to its value. Under this commission it was sorted into eleven degrees, and that with so much impartiality, that the proportional values as then ascertained, have

\* *Elstobb*, speaking of the above act, says, that the Governor, Bailiffs, and Conservators were made *Commissioners of Sewers*, for preservation of the Level, by convenient outfalls to the sea; and they or any five of them, whereof the governor or any of the bailiffs be two, to act as commissioners of sewers within the said great level, and of the works made, or to be made without the said level for conveying the waters by convenient outfalls to the sea. No other commissioners to meddle. A governor or bailiff to have 400 acres out of the said 95,000; the conservator 200; and the commonalty elections 100 acres, to enable them to vote. *Elstobb's Observations*, p. 14.

ever since been regarded as a standard." † Nothing very material, or remarkable, in regard to the fens, appears to have been done afterwards during the remainder of Charles' reign, or that of his brother and successor James.

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SECTION VIII. *The same subject continued, from the revolution to the present time.*

In the year 1697 the Bedford Level was divided into three districts, North, Middle, and South; having one surveyor for each of the former, and two for the latter. This distribution, which had been made for its better government, was the source of considerable divisions. A misconceived distinction of interest arose between the different proprietors; and their dissatisfaction being increased during a long minority in the Bedford family, to whom, as proprietor of the North Level, the others were greatly indebted. Application was made to the Legislature in 1753, and an act obtained to settle the account of the corporation, and separate the North Level from the rest, except in those instances wherein their alliance was necessary for the service of the country. On this occasion the Duke of Bedford remitted the sum due to him from the South and Middle Levels; and the Earl of Lincoln, to whom they were also indebted, concurred in the generous example.

† See Beauties of England, vol. 2.



Soon after passing the above act, which separated the north from the middle and south levels, a treaty was negotiated between the Bedford Level Corporation and the principal persons interested in the trade carried on through the river Nene, from the Port of Lynn to the counties of Huntingdon and Northampton. That part of the river which lay within the boundaries of the great Level, was so filled up by the silt and other matter, which the tides and upland waters had deposited, that the navigation was much impeded, and the expence of every voyage considerably increased. This caused an application to the managers of the Bedford Level, for their assistance in the necessary work of cleansing the channel of the river, and making it deeper; and the parties, after several meetings, agreed in the outlines of a plan intended to answer the ends both of draining and navigation. The same year, the persons interested applied to Parliament, and the measures proposed for their mutual benefit received the sanction of the legislature. By the act then passed, the corporation of the Bedford Level renounce the general power possessed over the river and its banks, and unite with a stated number of land-proprietors, chosen from the south and middle districts, in raising a *fund*, \* to be appropriated to scour out and deepen the bed of the Nene and its communicating branches.

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\* This fund was at first usefully applied, and the channel and navigation of the Nene considerably improved. The interest of the money borrowed on the occasion, was also for some years regularly and punctually paid; so that the river Nene securities, as they were called, were generally reckoned very good. Of late years, however, the state of

The above acts form the basis of the constitution appointed for the government of the Bedford Level; for though many others have been procured within the last 50 years, for draining separate districts within its limits, yet they all contain a clause, reserving the powers of the Corporation as established in the 15th Charles II.

Of late years a measure has been frequently agitated, and in 1795 passed into a law, for improving the outfall of the river Ouse, and amending the drainage of the south and middle Levels, by making a Cut across the marshes from Eaubrink to Lynn. Great advantages are expected to be derived from this new channel, and the commissioners appointed by the Act are now employed in levying taxes to enable them to proceed with the work; but it is not yet begun.

Notwithstanding the various projects that have been executed and the vast expence incurred to complete the drainage of the Fens, the work is yet imperfect; and in many places the farmer is still liable to have all the produce of his grounds carried away by inundations. The peculiar situation of the Level, which renders it the receiver of the collected waters of nine counties, and the want of attention to those comprehensive measures which alone could have equalled the evil, by providing a sufficient *outlet* to the sea for the descending torrent, when

things has greatly altered for the worse: the river has been neglected, and suffered to be filled up with silt and mud; the navigation impeded; the interest of the money borrowed between fifteen and twenty years in arrears, and the creditors gravely told, that there is no money in hand for them. Their case therefore seems to be without remedy and without hope; there being, it is to be feared, no prospect of another chance to restore or improve the said river. What is become of the said fund?



swelled by the numerous currents from the hills produced by a rainy season, are frequently the occasion of high floods, by which many thousand acres of prime land are overwhelmed and made useless for the whole year.

Among the great variety of expedients employed to drain the marshes, where the regular and common means have failed, is the erection of windmills, or rather engines worked by the wind, which, from their number and situation in some parts of the fens, present a very singular and rather queer and grotesque appearance. These raise the water to a sufficient height to admit of its being conveyed into receptacles enough elevated to carry it into its proper channel.

A great many thousand acres, within the extent of this low country, are still in the condition of waste unimproved fen, the average value of which is said to be little more than four shillings an acre. One writer states that upwards of 150,000 acres are in that condition in Cambridgeshire alone, \* which, however, has been thought by others somewhat inaccurate, and beyond the truth. Be that as it may, the quantity of such lands in the fens is certainly very great, and must sufficiently demonstrate that the immense labour bestowed, in draining the Level, has not been attended with the salutary effects which the promoters of the various plans too fondly imagined and promised; and it may still be questioned whether the remedies proposed, and partially executed, are adequate to effect the intended purpose. †

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\* See Agricultural Survey of Cambridgeshire.

† Beauties of England, 2, 18.

SECTION IX. *Miscellaneous Observations on the present appearance, produce, and state of the Fens.*

The elevated spots on which the towns and villages are built in many parts of the fens, appear like islands rising in the midst of low and level marshes; and the churches being generally erected on the highest parts, may be distinguished at the distance of several miles. The cottages in many places are nothing more than mud-walls, covered with thatch or reed. The application of the land is various. The crops of oats are particularly exuberant, the produce being frequently from forty-five to sixty bushels an acre; great quantities of wheat and colesseed are also grown, and generally with a proportional increase. Many thousand acres are also appropriated to pasture.

In the neighbourhood of Elm, Upwell, Outwell, &c. considerable quantities of hemp and flax are grown; but the culture of these articles, as a preparation for wheat, does not receive that attention which their importance demands. Some very fine butter is made in the dairy farms in this district; and the vicinity of Cottenham is famous for a peculiar kind of new cheese of a singularly delicious flavour; which is partly ascribed to the mode observed in the management of the dairies, and partly to the nature of the herbage on the commons. Many parts are remarkably favourable for the growth of corn; but the situation of some of them renders them so extremely liable to be overflowed, that their luxuriant produce is too frequently destroyed by the floods. † It is

† See Beauties of England, 2, 18, 19.



generally said, however, that if the occupiers have one good year in every two or three, they will make a very tolerable shift to live. The sheep in some parts are said to be very subject to the rot, which has been attributed to the neglected state of the fens in those places, occasioning the ground to produce rank and unwholesome herbage.

The grounds are perhaps no where richer or more fertile, in any part of this low country, than about Wisbeach and Long Sutton. The pastures there are exceedingly fine and luxuriant. The crops of corn also are in general abundant, but much more subject to blights than in the hilly parts, and the grain is said to be lighter, and much inferior in quality to that of the high country.

Towards March and Chatteris, the land, though apparently very good, is said to be apt to produce such an increasing quantity of thick moss, as renders it in a few years unfit for pasturage; to remedy which, the farmer has the surface pared off and burnt, preparatory to its being ploughed up; by which means the moss is effectually destroyed, and a good manure provided for the ensuing crops, which are for the most part very plentiful. After a while it is again converted into grass land, and so continued till the moss gathers and appears as before, when the former process is again resorted to, as the only remedy.

One very great inconvenience, which the inhabitants of this low country labour under, is the want of good

water, especially in dry summers, owing to the scarcity of springs. Rain-water is the only water they can have for domestic uses, almost throughout the year: to preserve which they have troughs and spouts constructed and fixed under the eaves of the houses, by which it is conveyed into cisterns and reservoirs for the use of their families. Even such populous towns as Boston and Wiscbeach have no better means of supplying themselves with good water; which in most parts of Britain would be deemed an intolerable grievance. To Lynn, however, the above case does not apply. The country on its eastern side abounds with good springs, from which the town is plentifully supplied with excellent water, as not to be exceeded in that respect, perhaps, by any place in the kingdom,

In Marshland and other parts of the country, it is with no small difficulty that water can be procured for the cattle in very dry seasons. Instances not few, are said to have been known at such times, of their being driven daily some miles to water, as none could be procured at a nearer distance. Such is the spongy quality of the soil in these parts, that pits dug to preserve the rain water would not retain it unless they were previously bottomed with clay, by which the water is prevented from sinking into the earth. Such pits are dug almost in every field; and for all the care and expence bestowed upon them, they are often found empty and useless long before the end of a very dry summer. Thus it appears, that this country, so fertile and desirable in some respects, has its advantages greatly counter-balanced by some ve-



ry serious inconveniences, from which the more hilly and sterile districts of the kingdom are happily exempted. On the whole, when the advantages and disadvantages of this low fertile country are fairly compared with those of the more barren and mountainous regions, it will probably be found that the favours of providence are much more equally distributed than we are sometimes apt to imagine.

Here it may be further observed, that the system of agriculture, and even the implements of husbandry are different in marshland and the fens from those of the higher parts of Norfolk; which is probably to be ascribed to the soil, or quality of the land being very different in the one from what it is in the other. In the former it is for the most part strong and heavy, but weak and light in the latter, so as not to require more than two horses to draw the plough, and which are uniformly managed without a driver.

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SECTION X. *Miscellaneous observations continued—Fen reeds and their uses—Starlings—Tame Geese, and singular management of them—Insalubriousness of Marshland—Ancient celebrity of the Smeeth—Decoys.*

Many parts of the fens abound with a remarkable species of *reeds*, which appear in summer, at some distance, like extensive fields of corn. In autumn, and at the approach of winter, they are resorted to by innumerable

flocks of Starlings; which then subsist upon the seeds of those plants; and lodge or roost among their branches, from whence, when scared, they ascend sometimes in such vast numbers as to appear in the sky like a thick cloud, exhibiting a very strange and striking spectacle to those beholders who are unused to the curious phenomena of this singular country. The fen-fowlers, in their long boats, take these birds sometimes by surprise, when thickly assembled among those reeds, and with their long guns make prodigious havoc among them. Myriads of them are so destroyed, and become a considerable article of food in the latter months of the year.

The reeds to which these birds resort, and from whose seed, for many months, they derive a great part of their subsistence, are no less remarkable in another respect: vast quantities of them are cut down, or reaped like corn, in the latter part of summer; being afterward carefully dried and dressed, they are tied up in bundles or sheaves, made up into stacks or ricks, and sold for coverings of houses, making perhaps the best *thatch* in the world. Great numbers of houses and barns, and even some churches are covered with them about the Fens and Marshland, and the adjoining parts of Norfolk. They are laid on very thick, curiously, and judiciously, and constitute a very durable, as well as neat covering, which is said to last sometimes thirty or forty years, with a little shaving and trimming. It has been observed of thatch coverings (those made of these reeds must be particularly so) that they make the coolest houses in summer, and the warmest in winter of all coverings what-



ever; being more impervious both to heat and cold than any other materials used for the same purpose. Thatching is executed in this country in a style of superior neatness, as well as firmness, and better calculated for durability, than the writer of this has known any where else except, perhaps, in the *Vale of Glamorgan*, where a similar method is used. The material there, indeed, is wheat straw, and not reeds, which in that country cannot be obtained in any large quantity; but the process of dressing and preparing the materials, as well as the method of laying them on, seem to be there and here much alike. It seems somewhat remarkable that districts so widely separated, and which are in most other respects so very dissimilar, should yet in this particular bear so near and striking a resemblance to each other. §

Some parts of the Fens, especially on the Lincolnshire side, have been long famous for breeding vast flocks of *tame geese*, of which great numbers are usually sent alive to the London markets.—They have also a remarkable custom of *plucking* the geese, and stripping them of their quills and feathers repeatedly every year, \* and so render each of them, conformable to *Plato's*

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§ In consequence of the late improvements of the Smeeth and adjacent parts, the reeds are said to have become much more scarce than they used to be.

\* The small feathers are plucked five times a year, (about Lady day, Midsummer, Lammas, Michaelmas, and Martinmas,) and the larger feathers and quills twice. Goslings are not spared; for it is thought that early plucking tends to increase their succeeding feathers. Some proprietors are said to have had a stock of a thousand, and even fifteen hundred, or more, beside the young ones.

memorable definition of *man*," a two-legged, unfeathered animal: " in which view it might be called *humanizing* the poor geese, or converting them into so many human beings. The practice however, has been by many thought *inhuman*, and barbarous, as it must put the poor creatures into no small degree of pain; ‡ but as it is gainful to the owners, in yielding them a far greater quantity of feathers than they would otherwise produce, there is no great prospect of its being very soon, if ever, discontinued.

The geese, during the breeding season, are lodged in the same houses with the inhabitants, and even in their very bedchambers. In every apartment are three rows of coarse wicker pens, placed one above another. Each bird has a separate lodge, divided from the other, which it keeps possession of during the time of sitting. A gozzard, or gooseherd, attends the flock, and twice a day drives the whole to water, then brings them back to their habitation, helping those that live in the upper stories to their nests, without ever misplacing a single bird. ||

Another odd custom in some parts of this same country, is that of preparing *cow-dung*, and converting it into *fuel*, by forming it, in a wet state, into the shape

‡ It has been said, indeed, that mere plucking hurts the fowl but little, as the owners are careful not to pull until the feathers are *ripe*; that is, until they are just ready to fall; because if forced from the skin before, which is known by blood appearing at the roots, they are of very inferior value. Those plucked after the geese are dead, are also said not to be so good.—see Beauties of England, vol. IX. p. 553.

|| Gough's Camden.—also Beauties of England.

of turf, and afterward drying it in the sun. It yields a strong disagreeable smell in burning, besides its depriving the farmer of a very large quantity of his best manure. Materials for fuel must, surely, have been very scarce in the country when this strange expedient or substitute was first adopted.

Marshland and the Fens are not deemed healthy, except, perhaps, to consumptive persons, who are said to be sometimes sent thither on account of the softness of the air. To most others the country is unhealthy, and subject to aguish disorders, which has always been the case, it seems, especially in Marshland; hence an ague is in Norfolk proverbially called *the Marshland Bailiff*, and a person afflicted with that disorder is said to be *arrested by the Bailiff of Marshland*. —Instead of hedgerows the fields are here generally enclosed with deepdikes, which for the most part of the year are filled with water, to which, probably, we are chiefly to ascribe the unhealthiness of the country; or rather to the putrid state of these dikes and stagnant waters, in the latter part of summer and the autumn. \*

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\* All this tract (of Marshland) and adjoining fens being little higher than the level of the sea, or that of the rivers that pass through the country, was once so exposed to inundations from floods and high tides, that till dikes and drains were made, it was all one large morass; and even now, after so much labour and expence, the country is still liable to be overflowed by extraordinary high tides or floods, or other casual events. By the evaporation of this water, and especially by that of the water of the numerous ditches, in which various plants and insects die and rot, the atmosphere during the latter part of summer and autumn is filled with moisture, and with putrid and insalutary vapours. —Another cause of the insalubrity of the atmosphere is an *imperfect ventilation*. As there are no hills here to direct the winds in streams up-



In passing along the road through this remarkable country, a stranger, from the hilly parts, cannot help being struck at first sight with the strange appearance of gates and gate-posts erected all about, without any hedges or visible enclosures to indicate either the necessity, or yet the utility of them; for as the dikes are not perceptible at a distance, the land on every side appears in many places like a great open field. A little time and reflection, however, generally rectify the wondering traveller's judgment.

The soil of Marshland is for the most part very good and rich; but no where more so than in that notable tract called the *Smeeth*, which has been long celebrated for its uncommon fertility. Till lately it was all a common belonging to the seven towns of Marshland; and old Authors used to relate that it constantly fed 30,000 Sheep, with abundance besides of the great cattle of the seven towns. So famous was this tract for the richness and luxuriance of its soil, at the accession of *James I*, that a courtier is said to have mentioned it then to that mo-

on the lower grounds, the air is apt to stagnate and become unwholesome. An additional cause of the unhealthiness of this flat and marshy country, may be the impurity of the water in common use; for this being either collected from rains, and preserved in cisterns, or drawn from shallow wells, is, in hot and dry seasons soon corrupted. This being the case, the general tendency to putrefaction must be increased by the use of such water, as well as by the meats, which in a close, hot, and moist air, are quickly tainted. Several circumstances therefore in this country concur in summer, not only to relax the solids, but to dispose the humours to putrefaction; and as the combination of heat and impure moisture is the great cause of the speedy corruption of animal substances, so it is observed in every place to produce remitting and intermitting fevers — See Pringle's Observations on Diseases of the army. pp. 2, 3, 4.

narch, as one of the most fertile spots in all his English dominions; adding “that if over night a wand or rod were laid on the bare ground, it would, by the next morning, be covered with grass, of that nights growth, so as not then to be discerned.” To which his majesty is said jocosely to reply, “that some parts of *Scotland* far exceeded that, for that he himself knew some grounds there, where if an *horse* were put in over night it could not be decerned the next morning;” alluding, it seems, to some of the bogs in that country.—The Smeeth has been of late enclosed, drained, and considerably improved. A great part of it has been ploughed up, and the crops produced are said to be in general very abundant, and likely to continue so. It may therefore be presumed, that the enclosing of the Smeeth will prove no detriment, but rather an advantage to the public; and also that its celebrity, as a most fertile spot, will not be diminished by its being no longer an open and unimproved common.

These parts have been long noted for great numbers of *Decoys*. They are said to be now much less numerous than formerly, owing, seemingly, to the various and progressive improvements that have taking place of late years, especially in *Lincolnshire*, and the consequent decrease of the aquatic wild-fowl. There are still, however, a good many decoys to be found in different places, of which the best is said to be that of *Lakenheath*, on the borders of *Suffolk*, from which very considerable numbers of aquatic wild-fowl of different kinds are usually sent to the *London Markets*.—An authentic ac-

count of this singular and curious contrivance, it being in general but ill understood, and but imperfectly described in books, shall be here inserted, as it is presumed it will not prove unacceptable to the reader.

A decoy is generally made where there is a large pond surrounded with wood, and beyond that a marshy uncultivated country. If the piece of water is not thus surrounded, it will be attended with the noise and other accidents, which may be expected to frighten the wild-fowl from a quiet haunt where they mean to sleep during the day time in security. If such noises or disturbances are wilful, an action will lie against the disturbers. As soon as the evening sets in, the decoy *rises* (as the term is) and the wild fowl feeds during the night. If the evening be still, the noise of their wings, during their flight, is heard at a very great distance, and is a pleasing, though melancholy sound. The *rising* of the decoy in the evening is, in Somersetshire, called *radding*. The decoy-ducks are fed with hempseed, which is thrown over the skreen in small quantities, to bring them forward into the pipes or canals, and to allure the wild-fowl to follow as this seed floats. There are several *pipes*, as they are called, which lead up a narrow ditch that closes at last with a funnel net. Over these pipes, (which grow narrower from their first entrance) is a continued arch of netting, suspended on hoops. It is necessary to have a pipe, or ditch for almost every wind that can blow, as upon this circumstance it depends which pipe the fowl will take to; and the Decoy-man always keeps on the *windward* side of the ducks, hol-



ding near his mouth a lighted turf, to prevent his breath or effluvia reaching their sagacious nostrils. All along each pipe, at certain intervals are placed skreens, made of reeds, so situated and contrived, that it is impossible the wild fowl should see the decoy-man before they have passed on toward the end of the pipes where the purse net is placed. The inducement of the wildfowl to go up one of these pipes is, because the decoy-ducks, trained to this, lead the way, either after hearing the whistle of the decoy-man, or enticed by the hempseed: the latter will dive underwater or swim quietly away, while the wildfowl fly on and are taken in the purse net. It often happens, however, that the wildfowl are in such a state of sleepiness and dozing, that they will not follow the decoy-ducks. Use is then generally made of a dog, that has been taught his lesson: he passes backward and forward, between the reed skreens, (in which are little holes, both for the decoy-man to see, and the little dog to pass through); this attracts the eye of the wild-fowl, who, not choosing to be interrupted, advance toward the small contemptible animal, that they may drive him away. The dog all the time, by the directions of the decoy-man, plays among the skreens of reeds nearer and nearer to the purse net; till at last, perhaps, the decoy-man appears behind a skreen, and the wild-fowl not daring to pass by him in return, nor being able to escape upward, on account of the net covering, rush on into the purse net. Sometimes the dog will not attract their attention, unless a red handkerchief, or something very singular be put about him.

The general season for catching fowls in Decoys is from the end of October till February; the taking of them earlier is prohibited by an act of 10. Geo. II. c. 32. which forbids it from June 1, to October 1, under a penalty of 5s. for each bird destroyed within that time. Most of the Decoys of this kingdom are in the Counties bordering on the great level of the Fens. There are some also in Somersetshire. Lincolnshire used to be the most noted county for its decoys, and it is probably so still. Amazing numbers of ducks, widgeons and teals, used to be taken there and sent to the London markets. Some years ago, within one season, and from ten decoys in the neighbourhood of Waynfleet, the number amounted to 31,200 in which were included several other species of ducks. The decoys are said to be commonly let at a certain annual rent, from 10 to a £100. It was customary formerly to have in the fens an annual driving of the young ducks before they took wing. Numbers of people assembled on the occasion, who beat a vast tract, and forced the birds into a net placed at the spot where the sport was to terminate.—150 dozens have been taken at once; but the practice being thought detrimental, has been abolished by act of Parliament.\*

\* A practice said to occur not unfrequently in this country, of *procuring mutton chops from live sheep*, and afterwards turning the poor animal out to grass, had better perhaps be here passed over, as sounding too much like Bruce's famous Abyssinian beef-steak story. But whatever may be thought of the latter, the former appears not to be unfounded—the part from which the chop is taken, is the *tail* of the animal.

SECTION XI. *Brief remarks on the parish churches of Marshland and Holland; with a short sketch of the history of the town and castle of Wisbeach.*

By those who have visited Marshland, nothing, perhaps, has been more admired than its parish churches, some of which are very large and stately: that of *Walpole St. Peters* is eminently so, and deemed one of the most beautiful parish or country churches in the kingdom. It is built of freestone, and consists of a nave, two aisles, and a chancel, all covered with lead. The tower corresponds with the other parts of the building, being a very handsome stone structure embattled. This edifice was founded near the close of the reign of Henry V. and completed in the first or second year of that of his successor. In one of the upper windows of the south aisle of this church is said to be a most absurd and profane representation of the Supreme Being, habited in a loose purple gown, with a long beard, resting his right hand on a staff of gold, and crowned with glory; pointing out the forefinger of his left hand, as dictating to the Virgin Mary, who is seated before him, with a pen in her hand, and paper on a desk before her. The Deity stands at the door or entrance of a castle, embattled, and with turrets, surrounded by a wall embattled; within this wall is the virgin; and many angels are looking down from the tower. —Here it may be observed, that when superstition has taken hold of the mind, there is scarce any thing too absurd to be imagined, or too impious to be received. Sad and shocking must be the



state of religion in a country where men are employed in making pictures or images of the deity, or where such images and pictures are preserved, or suffered to exist in places of worship. It would not, surely, be to the discredit of the minister and parishioners of Walpole to have the above preposterous and profane representation defaced, or removed.

Marshland indeed must not be thought singular, among the several districts of this flat and stoneless country, for the largeness, stateliness, and elegance of its churches. The case is much the same in the adjoining district of *Holland* in Lincolnshire, and in most of the northern parts of Cambridgeshire. In no part of England are to be seen larger or handsomer country churches. They are mostly built with good freestone, and yet there is no freestone, or any other stones here to be found, but what have been brought from a great distance. Where the stones used in building these churches were procured, seems to be unknown to the men of this generation. They must have been brought a very great way, and conveyed by water carriage, as the expence would otherwise have been enormous and unsupportable. Some, indeed, will tell us, that the masons and carpenters worked then for a *penny a day*, and that other labour was in the same proportion; but they seem to forget that their penny was worth a great deal more than ours. Money, in this country, has greatly sunk in its value since that time. A penny would then, probably, go as far as 2s. or half a crown of our money; so that, at any rate, the expence of the erection of these churches must have

been very great, and such as the present inhabitants, with all their boasted wealth and resources, would hardly (or rather, not at all) be equal to.

With sumptuous seats and magnificent palaces it does not appear that this country did ever much abound. Its strength might be too much exhausted in building churches, to admit of undertaking any other very expensive edifices. The Castle of Wisbeach seems to be almost the only exception; which, though situated a few yards out of the limits of Marshland, it may not be altogether improper to give here a short sketch of its history, as well as that of Wisbeach itself.

Of that town little is known before the conquest. Sometime previous to that event, and in the early part of the same century (the 11th) it is said to have been given to the Convent of Ely (along with other large and important possessions in the different counties of Cambridge, Norfolk and Suffolk) by *Oswy* and *Leoflede*, the parents of *Alwyn*, afterwards bishop of Elmham, upon his admission into the said convent. As the property of a convent, or monastery, it may be presumed to have been of old a very *religious* town; which character it seems still in no small degree to retain, though in a different way.

Of its Castle, however, no traces are known to exist before the arrival of the Norman, with his conquering army of Frenchmen. In 1071, five years subsequent to

that event, the conqueror, it is said, built here a stone Castle, the governor of which was dignified with the title of *constable*, and the walls and moat were ordered to be kept in repair by the proprietors of certain lands in West Walton, who held their estates by a tenure to that effect. This fortress is supposed to have been afterwards dismantled in the reign of Henry II, but upon what occasion we are not informed. Nor have we any account of another such edifice at Wisbeach till the reign of Henry VII, when a new Castle of brick appears to have been built on the site of the former, between the years 1478 and 1483, by bishop Morton, already mentioned as an eminent benefactor to the adjacent country. This new edifice became the said bishop's palace, in which he and several of his successors afterwards resided.

In Mary's time the place seems to have undergone some change, but whether so as to cease being an episcopal residence, or not, does not appear. But we find that some part of it, at least, was then appropriated for the confinement of heretics, that is, of protestants. The names of two of these, who were inhabitants of the town, are still upon record. One of them was William Woolsey, and the other Robert Pygot. They were for sometime confined in this Castle, and afterwards removed to Ely, where they were both burnt, and along with them a great heap of books, which seems to imply, that one of them at least was a scholar, or considerable reader, and that, probably, was Woolsey; for it appears that Pygot was by trade a painter, and therefore not very likely to be possessed of many books. He is spoken of as remarkably



meek and modest, whereas Woolsey was a person of uncommon courage and boldness, viewing the impending danger without dismay, and setting his unfeeling persecutors, and even death itself at defiance. He was, it seems, somewhat fearful lest the gentleness of his fellow-sufferer should give his enemies advantage over him and occasion his recanting; but it did not prove so: Pygot stood firm to his principles; and when the commissioners presented a paper for him to sign, he said, "No, that is your faith, and not mine." They suffered, towards the latter part of the year 1555. ‡

In the reign of Elizabeth, the then bishop, or bishops, it seems, relinquished this castle for the use and accommodation of the civil power; and it was then converted into a state prison for the papists, who were charged with conspiring against her majesty's government. Great numbers therefore of these people suffered here a long and rigorous imprisonment, and not a few of them miserably perished in its dreary dungeons. That queen amply retaliated upon the papists what her sister Mary had before inflicted upon the protestants. It is hard to say which of these crowned sisters was the most bloody. Fox has largely described the cruelties and atrocities of Mary's government. Certain popish, as well as protestant nonconformist historians have done the same in regard to that of Elizabeth: and if the intolerance, iniquity, and cruelty of the latter reign did not exceed those of the former, it seems pretty clear that they fell not short of

‡ Brief view of the Sufferings and living Testimonies of the Martyrs, p 322

them. As to the number of victims, or sufferers, the preponderance is evidently on the side of Elizabeth. There was a difference, indeed, in the process or mode of immolation: Mary had her victims burnt at the stake; whereas her protestant sister had hers hanged, cut down alive, emboweled, and quartered. Which of the two modes is the most humane and defensible—or rather, which of them is the most barbarous and brutal, the present writer will not attempt to determine. Nor will he pretend to say which of the two is attended with the greatest degree of animal pain, as that may depend upon circumstances. But if burning be the most cruel of all executions, as a very able living writer has observed, it argues a defect in our laws, which appoints this to be the punishment of petty treason, whilst the Catholic sufferers underwent that annexed to high treason. He also observes with respect to the greater part of those victims, “that the sentence of the law was strictly and literally executed upon them. After being hanged up, they were cut down alive, dismembered, ripped up, and their bowels literally burnt before their faces, after which they were beheaded and quartered. The time employed in this butchery was very considerable, and, in one instance, lasted above half an hour.—Great numbers also of these sufferers, (he adds) as well as other catholics, who did not endure capital punishment, were racked in the most severe and wanton manner, in order to extort proofs against themselves or their brethren. It appears, (he further observes) from the account of one of these sufferers, that the following tortures were in use against the Catholics in the Tower: [and probably also

in the Castle of Wisbeach:] 1. The common rack, in which the limbs were stretched by levers. 2. The scavenger's daughter, so called, being a hoop, in which the body was bent until the head and feet met together. 3. The chamber, called Little-Ease, being a hole so small that a person could neither stand, sit, or lie straight in it. 4. The Iron Gauntlets. In some instances needles were thrust under the prisoners nails.—Sir Ower Hopton, lieutenant of the Tower, was commonly the immediate instrument in these cruelties there; but sometimes Elmer [Aylmer] bishop of London directed them."

‡ How far the bishop of Ely was concerned with similar proceedings at the Castle of Wisbeach, we are not informed; but whether he was concerned or not, we may presume that similar measures were pursued there. The Wisbeach prisoners were distinguished, not only for their numbers, amounting to some scores, at least, but also for their rank and eminence, being mostly priests and scholars, who had been educated either at Oxford and Cambridge, or at some of the foreign universities. Hence when their more illiterate, or uneducated brethren, in other prisons, were called to defend their tenets against the attacks or arguments of the clergy, they would be expressing their wishes that some of their more learned friends, from Wisbeach Castle, would be allowed to take their part: and when the judge, at the trial of Barkworth, at the Old Baily, sneeringly proposed his being tried by a *jury of priests*, "That is right," replied the prisoner; "Your lordship knows that a complete ju-

‡ Milner's Letters to a Prebendary, No. 4.



ry of them may be found at Wisbeach Castle." \* In short, many of these catholic sufferers under Elizabeth, appear to have been no less sincere and devout, and even, no less unjustly treated, than those protestants, whose cruel sufferings have rendered Mary's reign so deservedly detestable.

For a good while after the accession of James I, Wisbeach Castle was still used for the same purpose as above described: but between the years 1609 and 1619, it is said to have been repaired by bishop Andrews, § who probably occupied it himself for some time after. On the abolition of the hierarchy, after the death of Charles I, it was purchased by the memorable secretary Thurloe,

\* Challoner's memoirs of missionary Priests, I. 392, 436.

§ This bishop, whose christian name, as it is called, was *Lancelot*, seems to have been in his day one of the better sort of the men of that order, as appears by the following anecdote, related of him after he had been translated from Ely to Winchester.—Waller, the poet, being one day at court, while James I, was dining, overheard the following conversation between his *sacred* majesty and two of his bishops, of whom one was Andrews of Winchester, and the other Neale of Durham. These two prelates, standing behind the king's chair, were asked by him, "If he might not take his subjects' money when he wanted it, without all the usual formality in parliament?" To which his lordship of Durham readily answered, "God forbid, sir, but you should; you are the breath of our nostrils." The other being silent, James addressed himself to him, "Well, my lord of Winchester, and what say you?" Andrews replied, that he was "not competent to judge in parliamentary cases." Upon which the king exclaimed, "No evasions, my lord, I expect an immediate and direct answer to my question!" "Then, sir," said he, "I think it lawful for you to take my brother Neale's money, for he offers it."—It is easy to see that there was some difference between these two bishops, and that the latter was the better man of the two, being by no means so lost to all shame and decency, or so abject a flatterer of majesty as the other. Which of them the majority of their successors have resembled most, may be a point not very easy to determine: nor would it be, perhaps, of very material consequence.

who rebuilt it in its present form, from a design of the celebrated Inigo Jones: but though still called *The Castle*, it no longer retained any appearance of a fortress. At the restoration it reverted to the see of Ely, but does not appear to have been ever afterwards an episcopal residence. It was from that period usually granted on lease to some one or other of the principal families of the town: the Southwells, in particular had it a long while, and resided there. Of late it has been sold, under an act of parliament, by the late bishop, to Joseph Medworth, Esq. The detached buildings have been since removed, and some rows of elegant houses have been erected. The plan of a large Circus has also been laid out, about one half of which is already built: when the design is completed it will add greatly to the pleasantness and beauty of the town. The Castle is still standing, and likely to stand, with what may be called fair play, as long as any of the new buildings, although it has been built now above 150 years, and was, at the time of the sale, *stated* (even by his lordship, it seems) to be in a decayed and ruinous condition.

The parish church of Wisbeach, dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul, is a spacious handsome fabric, though of a very singular construction, being furnished with two naves and two aisles. The naves are lofty and separated from each other by a row of light slender pillars, with pointed arches. The aisles are the most ancient, being divided from their respective naves by low massy pillars, and semicircular saxon arches. The tower is deemed

very beautiful, and has been thought ancient, but its claim to antiquity is said to be fully refuted by existing records, which prove its erection to have been posterior to the 10th of March 1520.—On the west side of the north entrance is a small chapel or chantry dedicated to St. Martin, and originally endowed with lands for the maintenance of a priest, to say masses for the soul of the founder. The church is a vicarage, said to be heretofore worth 500*l.* a year, but now, it seems, more than double that sum, in consequence of a late litigation, which terminated in favour of the vicar, and the complete discomfiture of his opponents. This is said to have occasioned not a little ill blood between the good pastor and some of his flock; but however that may affect them, so large an addition of income will probably prevent his laying it very deeply to heart. It may, however, perhaps, be somewhat doubtful, if the present extraordinary juncture, and most eventful period, be altogether the most safe or proper for the clergy to promote or engage in these unconciliatory and offensive litigations.

Besides the parish church, there are at Wisbeach six other different places of worship; one belonging to the *friends*, commonly called *Quakers*, one to the *Independents*, or *Culymites*, one to the *Wesleyan Methodists*, and three to those of the *baptist* denomination. Between the latter, though they all go under the same name, there yet exist some strong shades of difference, so that very little of any thing like good understanding or christian harmony is discoverable. Yet they all lie, more or less, under the imputation of heterodoxy, from



the great or main body of their brethren, who are usually termed *particular baptists*,—as well as from the rest of the right orthodox clans. Of these three societies one belongs to a certain order or description of arminian or general baptists, who are pretty numerous about Leicestershire and the adjacent counties, and also in some other parts. Except on the point of baptism, they agree very much with the Wesleyans, and may, perhaps, without much impropriety, be called *Wesleyan baptists*.—Another of these three societies belongs to a small party of baptists, sometimes called *Johnsonians*, from the late John Johnson of Liverpool, to whose peculiar tenets and spirit they are very much attached; and they have, seemingly, but little charity or forbearance towards any thing that does not come up to, or accord with that standard; which may be said to be the worst trait in their character. They are otherwise respectable, and so are the members of the society before mentioned. Less bigotry would make both more amiable and more respectable. The people who constitute the other baptist society assume the name of *Unitarians*, and belong to a notable class of that denomination which is said to be now much on the increase in different parts of the kingdom. The leaders of this new religious class profess to have for their main object to restore christianity to its original purity: they adopt a popular strain of preaching, and are by some people looked upon as highly *evangelical*; so that, as we have had for some time *evangelical trinitarians*, both in the church and out of it, we are now, it seems, to have likewise *evan-*

*gelical unitarians*. Some zealots among the orthodox will probably nibble at this, and even pronounce it absolutely impossible; but the pastor of the said society, at Wisbeach, is said to be ready to maintain, against the very best man among his opponents, not only that those of his connection are really *no less evangelical*, but even much *more so* than any of those on whom it has been the fashion of late years to bestow that honourable appellation. Nothing further needs here be said on the subject: the public will have an opportunity to judge for themselves, if any one will enter the lists, or step forward to discuss the point with the said pastor.

To have among its inhabitants so many different religious societies or sects, can be no real reproach to Wisbeach. The exercise of free enquiry, and unrestrained judgement and decision in matters of religion, must be the undoubted and unalienable birthright of every rational being, or moral agent: nor can a diversity of religious sentiments or persuasions be any way detrimental to the welfare of the community, provided all parties were earnestly to concur in promoting general harmony and goodwill among their fellow citizens. It is, however, much to be regretted that this has been hitherto but very imperfectly learnt and practised by most of our religious fraternities, both in the establishment and out of it. It is too generally the case, that the leaders of the respective parties promote among their adherents a hostile, and not unfrequently a most rancorous spirit towards their differing neighbours: and the higher men are placed on the scale of orthodoxy and evangelicalism, the more

apt are they in general to run into this enormity. It would seem as if they had taken their ideas, not from Jesus Christ, but rather from those over-zealous and mistaken disciples who would fain have confined the name and profession, as well as the propagation of christianity to those, forsooth, who would *follow them*. Wherever real liberty exists, a diversity of religious opinions and denominations must be expected; but that would furnish no just cause of complaint, were the above evil sufficiently guarded against by all parties. Acts of uniformity in religion, attended with national creeds, tests, and articles of faith, may suit the piety of popes, or the crooked policy of despotism, but they can never accord with the rights of man, or the true principles of freedom: they will never be admitted in a land of liberty, and can belong only to those hateful regions inhabited by slaves and governed by tyrants.

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## SECTION XII. *History of Wisbeach continued.*

Wisbeach was formerly a parliamentary borough, and that as early as the reign of Edward I. \* The exact time when it ceased to be so, does not appear. That privilege was afterward restored to it under the protectorate, but withdrawn again at the restoration, and never restored since; while such insignificant places as Castle-Rising and others of a similar description, still continue (absurdly and ridiculously enough, it

\* History of the Boroughs, volume 3.



must be said) to enjoy that privilege. Were such paltry places disfranchised, to make room for the admission of such as Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, and Sheffield, it would appear very reasonable; but as that is not at present to be looked for, we will here dismiss the subject.

Ever since the reign of Edward VI. Wisbeach has been a corporate town, but of a sort most singular and whimsical, and at the same time the most harmless that can well be thought of. Had all our corporations been like it, there would have been, it is presumed, not much reason to complain of them. This corporation appears to have emanated from a religious fraternity, called the Guild of the Holy Trinity, instituted in 1379, and possessed of estates for pious and charitable purposes. This establishment shared the general fate of ecclesiastical foundations in the reign of Henry VIII; but Edward VI, on his accession to the throne, having passed an act which provided for the security of those institutions that had been originally founded, either as grammar-schools, for relief of poor persons, or for the maintenance of "piers, jetties, walls, or banks against the rage of the sea, &c." the inhabitants of Wisbeach availed themselves of the statute, and through the solicitations of Gooderich, bishop of Ely, were elevated into a corporation, on the 1st of June, 1549, and invested with all the possessions of Trinity Guild, (lying in eight different parishes, and occupied by thirty-nine tenants) the revenues of which were then estimated at 28*l.* 2*s.* 3½*d.* but were, undoubtedly, much greater. \*

\* Hutchesson's Account—also Beauties of England.

By king Edward's charter the inhabitants were directed to assemble annually, and elect *ten men*, who were to have the direction of the *business* of the body-corporate: yet for the first thirty six years after the charter was obtained, they seem to have done little else than meet once a month in the town-hall, and, "out of mutual love and amity," immediately adjourn to a tavern, where having *dined*, ‡ they decided petty controversies among the inhabitants. Afterwards they proceeded further than they were warranted by the charter: they took cognizance of the accounts of the churchwardens, and surveyors of the highways; they directed the application of money over which they had no right; assumed the privilege of levying an acre-tax; and moreover, during the *plague*, which raged here in 1587 and 1588, they summoned delinquents before them, and punished them at their own pleasure."

On the 28th of January 1610-11, the inhabitants obtained a renewal of their charter, at the great expence of 19*l.* 19*s.* 3*d.* They were then constituted a body-corporate, by the style of "the Burgesses of the town of Wisbeach;" but the right of election of the *ten men*, thenceforward named "Capital Burgesses," was limited to the possessors of freeholds of the value of 40*s.* a year. From this period the said ten men, as we are informed, became objects of veneration and confidence, and were entrusted with the care of nearly all the donations for the benefit of the poor.

‡ According to Hutchesson they used to dine at a groat a head: but a groat then was equal perhaps to two or three shillings of our money.

On the 17th of February 1669 they obtained a *second* renewal or confirmation of their charter; on what occasion we cannot discover. Their executive officer is the *Town-Bailiff*, || who, though a person wholly unknown to the charter, has the entire management of the estates and affairs of the corporation. He is not at liberty, however, to expend more than 5*l.* at one time, without an express order of the body-corporate.—These Capital Burgesses have no connection with the jurisprudence of the town, nor have they any degree of civil authority, as the civil government of the town is not distinct from the general magistracy of the Isle of Ely, in which it stands: their principal business is to regulate the management of the revenues of the estates bequeathed, partly for charitable, but chiefly for public purposes. The income, of which they direct the expenditure, amounts to about 800*l.* annually; and to the credit and honor of the parties concerned, we are told, that it appears to be not only honestly, but even wisely expended. Part of the said sum arises from a grant made to the corporation by the Trinity House, in 1710, of one penny per ton upon all goods exported and imported, for the purpose of maintaining buoys and beacons, and keeping clear the channel of the river,”

Among other improvements to which their attention has been directed, was the building of an elegant stone bridge, in the room of the old wooden one, over the

|| In all the adjacent villages the title of *Town-Bailiff* is given to the treasurer or manager of their respective charitable establishments.—Beauties of England.



great river. This was done about 1767, at the expence of nearly 2,300*l*. It consists of one elliptical arch, very accurately proportioned. A new Custom-House has been also erected; and the Streets are cleaned, lighted, and watched, at their expence. Of late a new Jail and Shire-hall have been likewise built; and when a few more improvements are made, and especially the finishing of the circus, but few towns will be more handsome than Wisbeach. The Theatre is a commodious building, in nearly a central situation. The Rose Inn, where balls and monthly assemblies are held, is said to have been a place of public reception from the year 1475, at which period it was known by the sign of the Horn; and on one of the out-buildings, erected in 1601, the figure of a horn is yet to be seen."

The trade of Wisbeach is said to have much increased of late years, through the improved state of the drainage and navigation of the fens, and consequent augmentation of the produce and consumption of the country: and it would, no doubt, have increased much more, but for the bad state of the harbour or river below. The average of the exports and imports amounts to 40,000 tons annually, The principal articles of traffic are coals, corn, timber, and wine. The neighbouring lands are in high cultivation, chiefly on the grazing System. The Sheep and oxen grow to a great size, and considerable numbers of them are fattened, and sent twice every week to the London market. The inhabitants are employed in commerce, there being no manufac-

ture of any kind in the place, though the surrounding country produces immense quantities of wool, hemp, and flax. The market is abundantly supplied with poultry, fish, and butchers meat; and the trade of the town is further promoted by six small fairs, for hemp and flax, horned cattle and horses. The canal, which was completed a few years ago, extending from Wisbeach river to the river Nene at Outwell, and thence to the river Ouse at Salters-Lode Sluice, opened a communication with Norfolk, Suffolk, and other counties, and has already benefited the town considerably.” \*

The Summer Assizes, and the January and Midsummer quarter sessions for the Isle of Ely, are held at Wisbeach; where the magistrates assemble also every wednesday and saturday to settle the assize of bread, and for other purposes. The chief Justice of the Isle, and all other magistrates are appointed by the bishop, who is here invested with temporal as well as spiritual jurisdiction. The education of youth at Wisbeach is provided for by a free school, and two charity schools, supported by voluntary contributions. The appointment of Master of the Free-School is vested in the Capital Burgesses, with the consent of any other ten inhabitants, having voices in the election of those Burgesses. It appears that the Trinity Guild used to allow the Schoolmaster the annual salary of 10*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* and that they also distributed annually among the poor the sum of 3*l.* 15*s.* which last sum, as Mr. Hutchesson as-

\* Beauties of England, volume 2.

sures us, has been continued invariably to this day. But 3*l*. 15*s*. is now a very paltry sum, indeed, compared to what it was in the 15th and 16th centuries. Its value now is scarcely a tenth part of what it was then. \*

An institution which has been justly deemed creditable to Wisbeach, is its *Literary Society*, formed in 1781, whose members sometime ago were about thirty, and its collection of books, or library consisted of upwards of a thousand volumes. — Besides this institution, and some reading societies, or book-clubs, Wisbeach can also boast of a *Philosophical Society*, the President of which is *Mr. Wm. Skrimshire Junr.* a gentleman much and deservedly respected among his fellow-townsmen. He is allowed to be well qualified for the presidentship of such an institution, from his extensive knowledge of those subjects which it is the aim of the Society chiefly to cultivate; and in some branches of natural history he is said to be eminently conversant. He is a native of the town, as well as one of the most ingenious, intelligent, and respectable of its inhabitants.

Many remarkable personages may be supposed, one time and another, to have appeared among the natives of Wisbeach; but we shall here mention but two of them, and those of very unequal merit. — One of them was *Dr. Henry Southwell*, late rector of Asterby, and the reputed author of a well known and popular Commentary on the Old and New Testament, commonly called

\* *Hutchesson's Account of Wisbeach.* and *Beaut. of Engl.* as before.



*Dr. Southwell's Family Bible*; not a page of which, however, was written by him, being absolutely unequal to such an undertaking, and but a few degrees, if any, above an idiot. \* But he sold his name to some London booksellers for a certain pecuniary consideration, and they employed one *Dr. Saunders*, a noted hackney writer, to do the work. They also produced Letters of approbation and recommendation, addressed to *Dr. Southwell*, from a great number of pretended eminent clergymen, in different parts of the kingdom. The trick succeeded, and the credulous public were taken in, as usual. It was, certainly, a most shameful business, and must be contemplated by all honest men with abhorrence and indignation: but the work brought no small gain to the publishers, for it had, it seems, a great run; and that, with them, would sufficiently sanctify the imposture. It is to be wished it could be said to be the only instance of the kind that occurs in the transactions of modern booksellers. But this is the age of imposition and humbugging, in which not only booksellers, but even ministers of State have sometimes been too fond of acting their parts.

The other person that shall be here named, as a native of Wisbeach, is *Thomas Clarkson*. He too is a clergyman; but of a character so very different from the former, that no two human beings could well be more unlike each other. His unparalleled exertions in behalf of the oppressed Africans, and for the abolition of the detestable *Slave-trade*, so long the disgrace and curse of this country, must place his name very high indeed,

among the modern sons of Britain—even far above our *Burkes*, our *Pitts*, and our *Nelsons*, as the real friend of his country and his species, and the benefactor of the human race. Compared with such characters, he appears as an angel of light by the side of a group of demons. The honor of giving birth to so estimable and distinguished a person, must justly entitle the town of Wisbeach to no small degree of lasting celebrity. He should, certainly, be placed at the head of those memorable and venerable instruments, who contributed to the abolishment and annihilation of our most shameful, detestable, and horrid traffick in human flesh and blood. But for his vigorous and unwearied efforts, the names even of a *Fox* and a *Wilberforce* had never perhaps been known, as the promoters and champions of that honorable and sacred cause. But the virtues he displayed, and the service he performed, on that never to be forgotten occasion, are too well known, and too frequently acknowledged, to need any eulogy that this feeble pen is capable of attempting. Long may he live to enjoy his well-earned fame, and to exhibit still more widely among his contemporaries, by his future writings, the truth and importance of those exalted principles, for which he so nobly and so successfully contended.

The attention bestowed upon Wisbeach by *William I*, in erecting there a stone castle, has been already noticed. To some of our succeeding monarchs it also appears to have been an object of partiality: we are accordingly informed that *Richard I*, March 28th, 1190, granted the tenants of Wisbeach-Barton Manor an ex-

emption or freedom from toll in all fairs and markets throughout England. This grant was confirmed, in 1214, by king *John*, who came to Wisbeach from Lynn in October 1216, as Dr. Brady has proved from original records preserved in the Tower. In the 12th of Henry IV. it was renewed, and again confirmed by writ of privy seal of Henry VI. Afterwards the privilege being forfeited, it was restored through the exertions of *Nicholas Sandford*, who died in 1608, and was buried in the church, where an inscription, on the brass plate inserted in his tomb-stone, commemorates his singular bounty and patriotism, as having *at his own charge freed the town from toll.*

After Oliver Cromwell had been appointed governor of the Isle of Ely, for his activity in swaying it to the interest of the Parliament, he caused fortifications to be raised near the Horse-shoe on the north side of Wisbeach, to secure the passes out of Lincolnshire, which continued attached to the king. The soldiers stationed to defend them were commanded by Colonel Sir John Palgrave, and Captain William Dodson; and the ammunition, and other warlike stores, were supplied from a Dutch ship, which the Queen had dispatched from Holland for the use of the royalists, but which very seasonably and conveniently fell into the hands of their opponents.

In 1643 the burgesses lent 150*l.* to Captain Dodson, who was then engaged in the siege of Croyland; and on the 25th of March 1644, they delivered to Major John Ireton four muskets, three bandeliers, and two swords,



for the service of the Parliament. They also furnished the latter with a loan of 250*l.* towards raising a troop of horse for the defence of the Isle. This troop seems to have been supported even after the Revolution, as on the 6th of June, 1690, 4*l.* were ordered to be paid towards the expence of a horse to serve in “the Troop,” and the town-bailiff was directed to defray a moiety of the charge for arms and furniture.”

Between the restoration and the year 1672, cities, towns, and even individuals, were allowed to coin copper money for the convenience of trade: the Capital Burgesses of Wisbeach, therefore, in February, 1670, ordered the town-bailiff to expend 20*l.* in coining half-pence, with the words “A Wisbeach Half-penny,” on one side; and on the other, the impression of the town-seal. In 1722, the poor-house was erected, at the expence of 2000*l.* borrowed for that purpose by the Capital Burgesses, on their corporation seal:—for being an invisible body, (like other bodies-corporate) whose intentions cannot be manifested or expressed by personal acts, or oral discourse, they could act and speak only by their common seal.” \*

“The frequent journeys made by George II. to Hanover, (whither it was supposed he transported a large share of the national treasure,) and his attachment to Lady Kilmarnock, afterwards Countess of Yarmouth, excited the displeasure of some of the inhabitants of this town; and the Rev. *Thomas Whiston*, curate to Dr.

\* See Blackstone’s Commentaries—also Hutchesson’s Account—and the Beauties of England, as before.

Bell, preached a sermon full of asperity against the King's conduct. His text was from Proverbs vii, 19—22. "The good man is not at home, he is gone a long journey, he hath taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed. With her much fair speech she caused him to yield. He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks." Mr. Whiston seems to have been endued with that talent which gives its possessor a facility in adapting the language and circumstances of distant ages to the occurrences of modern times; of which he gave further proof after the suppression of the rebellion in 1745, and the return of the Pretender into France, when he zealously defended the succession of the House of Brunswick, taking for his text, 2 Kings, xix, 33. "By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord." \* One would suppose this clergyman to have been in his day somewhat of an uncommon and singular, though not apparently of a disreputable character. He was evidently a patriot and anti-jacobite; and, unlike most of his order, he could discern the errors and misdoings of the great, and even testify against them in a very open and pointed manner. On the prudence and propriety, or expediency of this part of his conduct, different persons, no doubt, would entertain different opinions. What he would have thought, said, or done, had he lived in the present reign, and to this very time, it is impossible to know. Of royal journeys

\* Beauties of England, as before.

to Hanover, and of female favourites, or mistresses of the sovereign, one may presume he would have seen no cause of complaint. But that the same would have been the case, as to all our state maxims, and public measures, and especially our three last wars, is more, perhaps, than we are warranted to conclude; as it seems rather probable, not to say more than probable, that Mr. Whiston would have discovered in some, if not in all of them, no slight cause of disgust and animadversion. How he would have stood affected toward some of our princes of the blood, or royal dukes, and what texts, or passages of scripture he would have applied to them, or made the groundwork of sermons or addresses to his parishioners concerning them, are questions that cannot now be answered or resolved.

The river Nene, being navigable from Wisbeach to Peterborough, and many other more distant inland parts, contributes much to the commercial importance of the former. There are also passage-boats on this river, which prove very convenient to travellers, in their progress to, or from the great north road.—Before we quit Wisbeach it may be here just hinted, that some of its inhabitants have often been heard loudly congratulating themselves, on the very superior advantages of their town, compared with Lynn and most other boroughs, where the corporation spirit is too apt to encroach and bear hard upon the unprivileged part of the community; but which, happily, never haunts, molests, or disturbs the people of Wisbeach. If that be really the case, they



have, certainly, cause for boasting; and we can do no less than hail them on the occasion. — The population of Wisbeach, as ascertained by the late act, amounts to near five thousand: so that it is the most populous town in the county, except Cambridge.

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SECTION XIII. *Additional account of Marshland—Parkin—Bishop of Ely's manor, in Terrington—Queen Henrietta—Admiral Bentinck—Cross Keys—Demolishers of the banks prosecuted and suppressed—High Tides—Destructive Inundations—Principal divisions of Marshland.*

Being here to quit Wisbeach, we shall now recross the ditch, † and take another turn in Marshland. In this remarkable District, as has been already intimated, scarce any edifices are to be seen, either of ancient or modern date, that are worthy of very particular attention, except the parish churches; and of them it does not seem necessary to give here any further description: but it may be just hinted, that next to Walpole St-Peter's, already described, the two Terringtons, one of the Tilneys, West-Walton, and Walsoken, are deemed the most considerable and remarkable. Some account of them may be found in Parkin's History of Freebridge Hundred and half.

In the same work may also be found a pretty distinct and circumstantial account of the different manors in

† It is really a ditch or dyke that separates Wisbeach from Marshland.

this district, one of which belonged formerly to the Crown, as a royal desmesne, and was repeatedly settled on some of our queens consorts, as part of their jointures.—It lies in Terrington, and is called the bishop of Ely's manor, having once belonged to his great lordship of West-Walton, Wisbeach, &c. It remained in the See of Ely till the death of bishop Cox, in 1581, when it came to the Crown by an Act of Parliament passed in the 4th of Elizabeth. James I. granted it with all its appurtenances to his eldest son Henry, and after his decease, to his other son Charles prince of Wales, on whose marriage it was settled on his queen, as a part of her jointure; from which, however, it has been thought not very likely that she ever derived much benefit. \* In the reign of Charles II. it was again settled on Catherine of Lisbon, his consort,

## P 2

\* Queen Henrietta, by her numerous indiscretions, contributed largely to the alienation of the affections of his subjects from the king her husband; and she suffered very severely in consequence of it. After her retirement into France, that court, at the head of which was her nephew Lewis XIV, is said to have been very remiss in administering to her relief, so as to leave her often in want even of the necessities of life. It has been reported that she was in such distress at Paris, in 1643, that she and her infant daughter were obliged to lie in bed, in their room at the palace of the Louvre, for want of wood to make their fire with. One time during the Protectorate, as Granger reports, she was so reduced, that she actually applied to Cromwell for relief, as queen dowager of England. In 1660, after an absence of many years, she returned to London, where she seems not to have been treated with much kindness by her son Charles. In 1665, at the breaking out of the plague, she again retired to France. From Sir John Reresby's memoirs it appears, that she was secretly married (probably about that time) to Henry Jermyn, earl of St. Albans, who had for many years attended her as chamberlain of her household, or some such character, and who afterward treated her in a most unkind and brutal manner. She died in 1669, in her 60th year.

as part of her dower or jointure, and was farmed by Sir James Chapman Fuller, bart. In 1696, William Bentinck, earl of Portland, had a grant of it from king William. Admiral Bentinck, a descendant of that family, is the present possessor of it, and of the greatest part of Terrington.—Somewhere upon this estate of his, is said to be one of the best spots in the whole country for forming a Decoy.—The Admiral, within these few years, has added to his possessions here a large extent of salt marshes, which he has rescued from the sea, and secured by strong and capital embankments. No part of his valuable territory here exceeds this newly recovered tract, in point of fertility: nor is it exceeded, if equalled, by any other part of Marshland: and yet it has been thought, from the high terms on which he lets it, that he himself has overrated its value. This point, however, must be left for him and his tenants to settle as they can.

In Terrington is that Wash, or passage into Lincolnshire, commonly called the *Cross Keys*. “Here (says Parkin) is a guide always attending, to conduct passengers over, bearing a wand or rod in his hand, probably in imitation of Moses, who had a rod when he conducted the Israelites through the Red Sea.” \* A guide certainly does attend; and it seems he bears a wand; but that he does so in imitation of Moses, was, perhaps, never supposed by any one before Mr. Parkin.—These guides might very probably use a wand, or long rod, for the purpose of sounding the depth of the water, or to discover any unevenness, dangerous holes, or sloughs at the bottom.

\* History of Freebridge, p. 258.



The Banks erected by the Romans to secure this country, appear to have been well constructed (as was generally the case with the great works of that people) and they served probably for ages as effectual bulwarks against the encroachment of the ocean. In a long course of time, however, they would naturally fall into decay; and the Saxons, who succeeded the Romans, being never very remarkable for their attention to such matters, or their skill in the management of them, it is not to be wondered that we often hear in aftertimes of breaches in the banks, and of high tides, or great inland floods deluging and desolating the country.

As long ago as the reign of Edward I. we read of certain lawless people making breaches in the banks, and resisting those who would have stopt them; upon which the king is said to have appointed certain persons to inquire into those misdemeanours, and punish the offenders. Afterward, in the same reign, mischievous persons are said to have thrown down the bank at *Little-lode*; when a new commission was issued to search after the offenders and bring them to justice. Another commission was issued some few years after, when Robert Russel, bailiff to the Abbot of Ramsey, John Mayner, Walter Hallerman and others, were found out as offenders, having by force of arms, broke down the Dam at *Smalclode*, and Richard Curteys the other at *Wadynstowe*; and the Sheriff was ordered to apprehend them. All this seems very plainly to indicate, that, even in the reign of our boasted *English Justinian*, the state of things in this country was very different from what it was in that of

the immortal *Alfred*. \* In the 22, of Henry VIII. an act passed, making it felony to demolish the sea banks, which seems to have put an effectual stop to those flagitious proceedings.

Among the shocking inundations, from which this low country greatly suffered in former times, the following seem to be the most remarkable.—In the year 1236, on the morrow after Martinmas-day, and the eight following days, the sea, by the violence of the wind, was raised to such a height, that the banks, yielding to the force of the water, were broken so, that “of small craft, cattle, and men,” great multitudes were destroyed. A similar calamity happened about nineteen years afterward. Also in 1457, by a breach in the bank of Wisbeach Fen, 4,400 acres of land were overflowed. Another of those disastrous events happened on monday and tuesday, the second and third of October, 1570, by which all Marshland together with the town of Wighenhale, were overflowed with salt water; so that from Old Lynn to Magdalen-bridge, there were not left ten roods of the bank whole and firm, to the very great damage of the whole country. How or when that damage was repaired, or the banks restored to their former state, does not appear; but in the 39th of the same reign (that of Elizabeth) complaint was made at a Session of Sewers, that through neglect

\* A single jail, in Alfred's golden reign,  
 Could half the nation's criminals contain.  
 Fair Justice then, without constraint ador'd,  
 Held high the steady scale, but deep'd the Sword:  
 No spies were paid, no special Juries known;  
 Blest age! but ah! how different from our own!

*Johnson's London.*

of keeping the water in at Rightforth Lode within the crests of the same, the grounds on the north side of the said Lode were, in time of great inundations, overflown, which occasioned the tenants, for avoiding the water, to cut the old Powdike, and issue the said water into Marshland Fen, to the great loss of the inhabitants and commoners there. It was therefore ordained and decreed, by the commissioners, that whoever should so transgress in future, should be fined 20*l*. for every such default.

After this, on the 1st of April 1607 (5. Jac.) there happened a mighty tide, which broke Catt's bank, and drowned Clenchwarton. About 1610, provision was made for draining the waters of Oldfield, Outwell, &c. without issuing them through Broken Dike into Marshland, and also for a general repair of all the banks. How far these measures were carried on, or effected, cannot now be said; but they proved entirely ineffectual to secure the country from that dreadful inundation of the sea, which happened on november 1, 1613 (11 Jac.) and which laid all Marshland and parts adjacent under water, and proved exceedingly calamitous to the whole country. In commemoration of this most disastrous event, the following rather quaint Inscription was set up on the East Wall of the south aisle in Wisbeach Church—“To the immortal praise of God Almighty, that saveth his people in all adversities, be it kept in perpetual memory, That on the Feast-Day of *All saints*, being the first of November in the year of our Lord 1613, late in the night, the sea broke in through



the violence of a North East wind, meeting with a Spring Tide, and overflowed all *Marshland*, with the town of *Wisbeche*, both on the north side and on the south; and almost the whole Hundred round about; to the great danger of men's lives; and the losse of some; besides the exceeding great losse which these counties sustained through the breach of the banks, and spoil of corn, cattle; and housing, which could not be estimated "

Dugdale in his History of Embanking has preserved "An Abstract of the losses in general (sustained on the above occasion) as they were presented by the Jurors of several Hundreds at the Session of Sewers held at Lynn, December 9, 1613.—*Within* the Ring of Marshland the statement of the said losses is as follows—*Terrington*, 10,416*l*; *Walpole*, 3,000*l*; *West-Walton*, 850*l*; *Walsoken*, 1,328*l*; *Emneth*, 150*l*; *Wigenhale* and *South Lynn*, 6,000*l*; *Tilney* and *Islington*, 4,380*l*; *Clench-warton*, 6,000*l*; *West* and *North Lynn*, 4,000*l*—in all 35,834*l*.—*Without* the Ring of Marshland, the damage was far less considerable, and is given as follows, *Gaywood*, 205*l*; *South Wotton*, 313*l*; *North Wotton*, 810*l*; *Wattlington*, 500*l*; *Totnel cum Wormegay*, 60*l*; *Holm cum Thorpland*, 40*l*; *Stow Bardolf*, 100*l*: in all 2,028*l*; which added to the former account will amount to no less a sum than 37,862*l*.—A sum equal, perhaps, to near half a million of our money.

The damages at or about Wisbeach, and *out of Norfolk*, are not included in the above abstract; though they must, doubtless, have been very considerable, and pro-

ably not much less than the former : the whole together must, of course, have been enormous, and equal to many hundred thousand pounds of our money.

In the months of January and February, and particularly on the 23rd of March in the ensuing year (1614,) the country sustained much additional damage from the snows that had fallen, and which had occasioned vast floods from the upland countries upon their going off. Great part of Marshland, from the bank called the Edge, between the towns and Emneth, to the New Podike, was overflowed with fresh water, by divers breaches between Salter's Lode and Downham Bridge. The country to the south of Wisbeach also suffered greatly on the occasion ; as did likewise the greater part of the land within South Eaubrink in Holland, which was so overflowed and damaged, from Spalding to Tydd St. Giles, as to be almost entirely lost for that year.— From these premises it evidently appears, that the boasted fertility, and numerous advantages of Marshland and the adjacent parts have often been woefully counterbalanced by disadvantages and evils of a most serious and distressing nature ; so as to leave the inhabitants but very little room to exult over their less wealthy countrymen, whose lot is fallen in the more sterile and rugged parts of the kingdom.

Before we finish this Section, it may be proper to say something of the principal divisions of Marshland, and its extent, which we often find differently represented. In its fullest extent, or *within its ring*, as it is some-

times expressed, Marshland comprehends the following parishes, (with the exception of part of that of St. German's, which lies on the eastern side of the river Ouse.)

—1. Emneth. 2. Walsoken. 3. West Walton. 4. Walpole St Andrew's. 5. Walpole St Peter's. 6. Terrington St Clement's. 7. Terrington St John's. 8. Clenchwarton. 9. North Lynn. 10. West Lynn. 11. Tilney All Saints. 12. Tilney St. Lawrence. 13. Islington cum Tilney. 14. Wigenhale St. Mary's. 15. Wigenhale St. German's. 16. Wigenhale St. Mary Magdalen.

—In another view, as a privileged district, and, particularly, as interested in the *Smeeth*, Marshland has been considered as much less extensive, comprehending only eleven parishes, or rather confined to *seventowns*, or townships: and then N. and W. Lynn, with the three Wigenhales are excluded. These town-

ships, or the seven towns of Marshland, as they are usually called, are thus enumerated—1. Emneth. 2. Walsoken. 3. West Walton. 4. The two Walpoles, both under one. 5. The two Terringtons, both under one. 6. Clenchwarton. 7. The two Tilneys and Islington, all under one, or constituting one township.—At what time this division of the district into seven townships took place, does not appear. It was, probably, at a remote period, and before the formation of the eleven parishes, which these townships now contain.

It may, perhaps not unreasonably be presumed to have originated under the East-Anglian government, at an early period of the Heptarchy:—if not, indeed, even before either the heptarchy, or yet the East-Anglian government had ever sprung into existence.



SECTION XIV. *Biographical Sketches of some of the most distinguished personages of other times, in Marshland and its vicinity.*

Of celebrated characters, or men who attained to high renown among their contemporaries, but a very moderate number appears to belong to Marshland or its vicinity. Some such, however, seem to have sprung up there, at different periods, within the last thousand years: and of them, whose names have been preserved, the first place, at least in point of seniority, seems to belong to

1. HICKIFRIC, vulgarly called *Tom Hickatris*, or *Hickathrift*. He is supposed to have lived some time before the conquest, and to have been in his day and generation,

“ A village Hampden, that with dauntless breast

“ The little tyrants of his fields withstood.”

He has been represented as the proprietor of the *Smeeth*; though he might, perhaps, be only entitled to the benefit of pasturage there, in common with the rest of his neighbours. Be that as it might, it is agreed on all hands that he was a person of uncommon strength, gigantic stature, and unshaken fortitude. Very different from most other men of might, it does not appear that he was ever accused of oppressing his weaker neighbours, insulting their persons, or committing depredations upon their property. His superior powers and valour were called forth and employed only in defence of his own just right and property, and those of his oppressed fellow-citizens. Tradition informs us of a

certain unwarrantable and base attempt being once made, by some lawless and powerful men, to encroach upon the neighbouring inhabitants, and dispossess them of their right to the *Smeeth*; or, at least, to deprive them of some part of that fertile tract; and which was to be effected by force of arms, as the inhabitants seemed determined to make resistance, and not tamely to part with, or give up their rights. An engagement accordingly ensued, which terminated in the total discomfiture of the invaders, and the consequent reinstatement of the inhabitants in the quiet possession of their wonted privileges. The victory was universally ascribed to the singular prowess and irresistible exertions of Hickifric, who fought that day, as the tradition says, with a cart-wheel in one hand, instead of a buckler or shield, and an axletree in the other, instead of a spear or battle-ax. In short he is said to have acquitted himself on that memorable occasion, so as to establish his character, and hand it down to posterity, as, at once, the firm patriot, and redoubtable champion. A stone coffin, in Tilney churchyard, is shewn to this day as having once belonged to him. But this, perhaps, may be questioned, as may also some of the circumstances of the above story, though the substance of it may be true: the affair of the *wheel* and *axletree*, for instance, like many other vulgar traditions, may be only hyperbolically and not literally true; and implying no more than, that he furnished himself for the said conflict with certain rustic, ponderous and unusual weapons; which blind tradition and stupid credulity afterwards converted into a cartwheel and an axletree.

2. *Saint Godric*. He is said to have been a native of *Walpole*, and to have originally followed the humble occupation or profession of a *Pedler*. He afterwards went on pilgrimage to Rome, and even to Jerusalem; but whether he relinquished his former profession before he set off, or took his pedlery along with him, does not appear. Some of the pilgrims of those times, it is said, used to engage, clandestinely, in certain pedling, mercantile, or commercial adventures, and to find their account in so doing, as the garb, or profession of pilgrims exempted them from the tolls or duties imposed upon mere pedlers, or merchants. Whether that was the case with our Godric, or not, he acquired the character of a *Saint*, and was *canonized*; which yet with some people will make no very great deal in his favour. In the latter part of his life he became a *hermit*, and lived sometime at *Finchale* near Durham, where he is said to have worn out no less than three successive suits of *iron* clothes, † which, with many, would be an indubitable proof that his sanctity must have been far superior to that of the wearers of *flannel*, *coarse woollen*, or even *haircloth*; by which kind of dresses numbers of his brethren chose to distinguish themselves. Godric died in 1170. Many miracles, of course, are ascribed to him; and his *girdle* that he left, was said to have in it such uncommon and wonderful virtue, as to make barren women fruitful.—After all, it seems not quite clear, or certain, that he was a better man, or worthier character than *Hickifric*.

† See Hughes's Letters; also Petit. Andr. History of England. 1.233.



3. *Sir FREDERIC TILNEY.* He was one of the attendants and Captains of *Richard I*, in his memorable expedition to the Holy Land, and was knighted by that monarch, in his third year, at *Acon* or *Acre*, otherwise *Ptolemais*—[a place rendered very famous during the Crusades; especially by the heroic achievements of the lion-hearted *Richard* and his followers; and no less so of late years, by its obstinate and successful defence against the arms and repeated assaults of *Bonaparte*.]—*Sir Frediric Tilney* was distinguished for his great stature and vast bodily strength; being, perhaps, a descendant of *Hickifric*. He survived the expedition to *Palestine*, and returned safe to his native country, where he ended his days in peace, and was buried with his ancestors at *Terrington*, *by Tilney*; that is, at *St. John's*, as it is supposed; where we are told his height was to be seen as late as 1556.—Sixteen knights of the same name (and supposed to be his descendants) succeeded him, most, if not all of whom lived at *Boston*.

4. *RICHARD DE TYRINGTON.* He is said to have been one of the great favourites of *King John*, who granted him, for his life, an annuity of twenty marks. Little more is known of him. But as a king's favourite, he must have been a noted man in his day. That king had many favourites, it seems, in and about *Lynn*. No part of his kingdom seemed to be more, if so much attached to him. His favourites and adherents, and this *Richard* of *Terrington* among the rest, may be presumed to be much of the same cast with their royal patron, and therefore the less said about them is best.

5. Sir FREDERICK CHERVILL, or *Chervile*, otherwise *Kervile*. He lived in the reign of Henry III. and had considerable possessions in Tilney, Islington, Wigenhale, and Clenchwarton. He was found, in the thirty-fourth year of that king, to have a *Gallows* in Tilney, and the liberty or power of trying and hanging offenders; by which it appears, that he was in his time a person of no small consequence and dignity in this country. He lived at the time when the Ouse deserted its ancient course or channel by Wisbeach, and mixed with the waters of Wigenhale and of Lynn. Of the qualities of his heart, or his particular deeds, good or bad, no memorial now remains.—The seat of the Kerviles, for many successive generations, was the manor-house of Wigenhale St. Mary's, of which only the gatehouse now remains, and is visible from the Wisbeach road. Its appearance seems to indicate that the mansion formerly attached to it was in its day a sumptuous edifice; and for no short period, perhaps, the first house in all ~~Marsh~~land.

6. JOHN COLTON: a native of Terrington, chaplain to *W. Bateman*, bishop of Norwich, and the first master of *Gonvil-Hall* in Cambridge. Afterward, on account of his great learning and piety, (as it is said) Henry IV. advanced him to the archbishopric of Armagh, and primacy of Ireland. While in that high station he was sent to Rome, and employed in the affair of the schism between Urban VI. and Clement VII. which occasioned his writing a learned treatise (as Fuller says) *De causa Schismatis*; and also another *De re-*

*medio ejusd.* He is supposed to have resigned his archbishopric some time before his death, which happened, it seems, in 1404. It does not appear that he was one of the worst men of his order.

7. WALTER TIRRINGTON, LL. D. a celebrated writer and author, is said to have been another native of Terrington. At what time he flourished, is rather uncertain; though it seems not improbable, that he was contemporary with *Colton*. Nor is it now known what those writings were which made him so celebrated as an author. Whatever they were, and they might be highly valuable in their time, they seem to have been long ago swallowed up in the dark devouring abyss or gulph of oblivion; and from which the very name of their author has hardly escaped.

8. JOHN AYLMER: born at Aylmer-Hall in Tilney, about 1521. When very young, Henry Grey, Marquis of Dorset, afterward Duke of Suffolk, took a great liking to him, entertained him as his scholar, and gave him an exhibition at Cambridge, where his proficiency was so considerable, that he was afterward deemed one of the best scholars of his time. \* From the University his noble patron took him to his family, and made him tutor to his children, among whom was the memorable *Lady Jane Grey*. He early imbibed the opinion of the reformers, and was very instrumental, under the patronage of the Duke of Suffolk, and the Earl of Huntingdon, in diffusing the same about Leicestershire, (in which

\* Particularly as an Hebrician, according to the learned Hugh Broughton.



county was the Duke's chief seat and residence,) where he seems to have had some preferment, and to have been for sometime the only preacher of that description. In time he was promoted to the archdeaconry of *Stow*, in the diocese of Lincoln, which qualified him to sit in Convocation, the first year of the reign of Mary, where he defended protestantism with so much zeal, learning, and acuteness, that he was soon after deprived of his archdeaconry, and obliged to abscond and quit the kingdom, to avoid the approaching storm. After he had embarked he was in no small danger from the searchers, who came on board, in quest of fugitives; but he happily escaped, partly through his own diminutive size, (being of small stature like *Zaccheus*,) and partly through the friendship of the Captain, who placed him in the empty end of a wine butt, that had a partition in the middle, where he sat very snugly, while the searchers were drinking wine, which they saw drawn out of the other end. He was sometime after landed on the continent, and got safe to Strasburgh, whence he shortly after removed to Zurich, where he diligently prosecuted his studies, and attended the Lectures of Peter Martyr. He afterwards visited most of the universities of Italy and Germany, and at *Jena*, in Saxony, he had the offer of the Hebrew Professorship, which he declined. After the accession of Elizabeth he returned home, and was one of the divines appointed to dispute at Westminster with an equal number of popish bishops. He sometime after was made archdeacon of Lincoln; but got no higher for a long while. At last, upon the

translation of Sandys to York, he was appointed his successor in the see of London. This elevation he is said to have owed, in a great measure, to the interest and friendship of that prelate, but which he afterward very ill requited. He now forgot his former affection to the puritans, and became a bitter persecutor. On Sunday afternoons he was fond of playing at bowls, and would use such language at this game as justly exposed him to reproach. When he happened to preach, if he observed his audience inattentive, he would take a hebrew bible out of his pocket, and read them a few verses, and then resume his discourse. \* He was a man of great courage, which he shewed on many occasions; one of which was his having a tooth drawn, to encourage the queen to submit to the like operation. *Strype* says, he was a man of metal, and could use his hands and arms well, ‡ and would turn his back on no man. *Fuller* says, he was foully belibelled by the puritans; but does not say how much provocation he had given them

\* One Brook, now a dashing orator at or about Burnham, and who also holds forth sometimes at Lynn, is said to have used the same experiment, and boasted of it,—and also of having doomed and consigned a certain neighbouring minister to *eternal torment*, for presuming, forsooth, to differ from his creed. Master B. is classed among the evangelicals, and seems to be very much in their spirit.

‡ How well he used them upon the poor popish prisoners in the Tower, whom he there most unmercifully flogged, or rather racked and tortured, we have seen above (p. 93) from the testimony of Dr. Milner. Some of the numerous puritan sufferers of that time might, probably, share from him the same fate; which may account for what Fuller calls his being *foully belibelled* by them, in return. After such treatment it would be very natural for them to think that they had some right as well as reason to complain: and it might also be natural for him, as well as for Fuller, to give those complaints the name of *libels*.

for so doing. He died at his Palace of Fulham, June 3. 1594.

9. *Sir* ROBERT AYLMER, elder brother of the preceding, appears to have been a person of some note in his time, and resided chiefly, as it is supposed, at Aylmer Hall, above-mentioned; but as the particulars of his history have not been recorded, and seem to be now entirely forgotten, no more can be here said of him.

10. THOMAS HERRING. He was the Son of the reverend *John Herring*, rector of Walsoken, where he was born in 1693. At a proper time he was sent to Cambridge, and in 1722, became chaplain to Dr. Fleetwood, bishop of Ely; In 1726 he was chosen preacher of Lincoln's Inn, and appointed king's chaplain; in 1737 he was made bishop of Bangor, and in 1743 was translated to York. When the rebellion broke out, and the king's troops were defeated at Preston Pans, the archbishop convened the nobility, gentry, and clergy of his diocese, and by an excellent speech removed the general panic, and excited such zeal among his auditors, that a subscription to the amount of 40,000*l.* was raised; and the example was followed in most parts of the kingdom. On the death of Dr. *Potter*, in 1747, he was advanced to Canterbury, and so attained to the very summit of ecclesiastical preferment and dignity; but his health very soon began to impair, and after languishing about four years, he died, in 1757, leaving behind him a very amiable and excellent character, in spite of the many disadvantages of his elevated si-



tuation, and his long course of worldly prosperity. He appears to have been a real and warm friend to civil and religious liberty, as well as one of the best and worthiest men of the age in which he lived.

11. Dr. RICHARD BUSBY. He was not indeed born in Marshland, but close by, at Lutton in Lincolnshire, in 1606. He had his education at Westminster school, and afterward at Christ-Church, in Oxford. In 1640, he was appointed master of Westminster school, and by his skill and diligence in that laborious and important office, for the space of fifty five years, bred up the greatest number of eminent men, in church and state, that any teacher or tutor could boast of in this, or perhaps in any other country. In his school discipline, he was extremely and proverbially severe, though he applauded and rewarded wit in his scholars, even when it reflected on himself. After a long life of unwearied assiduity and temperance, he died, in 1695, at the age of 89.

Here it may not be improper to add, that the noble families of the *Howards* and the *Walpoles* appear to have originated in Marshland.—The ancestors of the former, sometime after the conquest, bore the name of *Wigenhale*, or *de Wigenhale*, from that being their place of residence, and where they had their most considerable possessions. In the 12th century lived a notable person of this family, whose name was Sir William de Wigenhale, and who, it seems, went sometimes under the name of William de Clenchwarton, from his having large possessions in that parish. John, the Son of this William, in the 13th cen-

tury, took the surname of *Howard*, (on what account does not appear,) and his descendants have borne that name ever since. William, the Son of this John Howard, became one of the most eminent lawyers and distinguished characters of his time, being Lord Chief Justice of England, in the reign of Edward I. and one of that King's privy Council. He owned the manor of East Winch, and the manor-house there appears to have been his principal seat, and where the family chiefly resided for some generations. In the chapel of St. Mary's, on the south side of East Winch church, supposed to have been built by him, he and many of his earlier descendants are said to have been buried. The Howard family continued to reside at East Winch till towards the close of the 14th Century, and perhaps longer. Sir William's great grandson, Sir Robert Howard, lived there, and there, it seems, he died and was buried, in 1388.—Sir William Howard rendered much good service, of some sort, to the corporation of Lynn, of which that body was not insensible, as appears by divers presents, which he and his lady received in return;—such as the carcase of an ox; one time, to lady Howard, which, with the conveying of it to Winch, cost *eleven shillings*, a sum equal, no doubt, to many pounds of our money. Another time a present of wine, together with two calves, and a collar, or shield of brawn, were sent as a present to Sir William, and valued at *thirteen shillings*. Another time, two salmons were sent to Sir William, on the vigil of Easter, valued at *eleven shillings*; \* which, compared with the value of the other articles,

\* Parkin, 308.

seems to indicate, that salmon was a very great rarity at that period.—Such was the origin of the far-famed House of Howard, which has been long since divided into so many noble branches, and makes so conspicuous a figure in the British Annals, and whose chief is now, and has long been the first peer of the realm,

As to the *Walpole family*, it appears to be no less ancient than that of the Howards, although it did not rise so soon to very great eminence. Like the Howards, or rather the *Wigenhales*, it first appeared among the opulent Marshland families, not long after the conquest; but whether either of these families is of Saxon, Danish, or Norman descent, does not appear. The Walpole family took its name from the town of Walpole in Marshland, where the forefathers of the family resided, and had large possessions. Reginald de Walpole, who lived in the reign of Henry I. is thought the lineal ancestor of the present family. His son, Richard de Walpole, married Emma the daughter of Walter de Hayelton (or de Houghton) of Houghton, in Norfolk. From that time, the family, or the principal branch of it, fixed its residence at Houghton, where it has continued almost ever since. Sir John Walpole, knight, was a favourite of Henry III. whom he accompanied in his expedition to Britany. His son, Sir Henry de Walpole, was a Judge, about the 50th year of the same king's reign. Another of the family, Ralph de Walpole, was about the same time bishop of Ely, and afterward of Norwich. † Some of the family, at different

† See Parkin, and Norfolk Tour, 131.



times, long after the removal of one branch to Houghton, appear to reside at Walpole; and in the reign of Henry VII. we find the owner of Houghton residing at Lynn, as appears by his Will, where he is called Thomas Walpole, Esquire, of Lynne Bishop. In that Will, among other things, he leaves certain lands and tene-ments at Walpole, “to the brodirhode of the Holy Trinity at Lynne Bishop, to the intent the Alderman and Skyvens of the said Gylde shall find and pay yerly eight marks to the wages of an abil prest to synge mess perpetually for his sowl, and the sowl of Jone his wife, in the chapel of our Lady, in the chapel of St. Nicholas in Lynne.”—For many ages the Walpoles made no mean figure among the Norfolk gentry; but none of them appear to have been advanced to the peerage till the eighteenth century; since which time, they have ranked among the principal nobility of the kingdom. But of the whole race, from first to last, the most distinguished and memorable character was the famous Sir Robert Walpole, prime minister to our two first sovereigns, of the present dynasty, and afterward created Earl of Orford; of whom some account will be given in the next chapter, section IV.

Here it may be added, that the family of the *Coneys* has also, for some ages, figured among the principal inhabitants of Marshland. They seem however, to have been originally of Lynn, and to have ranked, at a pretty distant period, among the principal people of that town. Some of their modern descendants are said to have prided themselves, not a little, on the score of

their remote ancestry, but as the remarkable, or memorable part of the history of those remote ancestors of the family, or even the very names of more than one of them, ‡ have not yet come to the knowledge of the present writer, it cannot be expected that he should say any more here about them.—The pride of ancestry, or the plea of being descended from renowned progenitors, is often very idle and childish, especially when none of the eminent or estimable traits which distinguished and characterized those progenitors are discoverable in their descendants.

‡ Walter Coney, Alderman, and four-times mayor of Lynn, in the fifteenth century, who is supposed to have lived in the corner house at the bottom of High Street, on the side, fronting the Church.—Further accounts of the above three families may be found in Blomefield and Parkin's History of Norfolk.—¶ To what was before said of *Terrington* (Section XIII) it may be here added, that the impropriation of the great tithes was given by James I. as an augmentation to Lady Margaret's professorship of divinity at Cambridge; and that this revenue, or income has so much increased of late years, as to render that chair the most lucrative piece of preferment now in the gift of the University.—Here it may be also noted, in addition to what was before said of *Walpole*, (Section XI.) that in the year 1727, a person digging there in his garden found, about three feet beneath the surface, numerous roman bricks, and an aqueduct formed of earthen pipes, which were twenty inches long, three inches and three quarters in the bore, and half an inch thick; the one end diminishing, so as to be inserted in the wider end of the other. Twenty-six were taken up whole, and distributed among several antiquaries.—See *Beauties of England*, v. 11, 288, 289.

## CHAP. III.



Of the parts about Lynn, on the eastern side of the Ouse.

SECTION I. *Aspect of the country—its agriculture and ruraleconomy—Wayland Wood—Memoir of Shuck-forth—parish churches and other edifices, ancient and modern.*

After passing from Marshland to the eastern side of the Ouse, the country presently begins to exhibit a very different appearance. The surface now ceases to be flat and even as before, and the very soil appears considerably altered and diversified. A light sandy soil soon presents itself, and the land becomes higher and comparatively hilly, as well as in general much less fertile and productive than in Marshland. The style, or mode and process of agriculture also differ considerably, as do likewise even the very implements of husbandry. There are certainly some slovenly farmers on this eastern side, but there are many others who manage their farms in a manner greatly snperior to what is generally done on the other side of the river. Indeed the comparative poorness of the soil here may operate



in no small degree as a spur to superior exertion and improvement. Where the land is poor nature requires the greater attention and assistance; and without skilful, laborious, and expensive management the cultivator cannot expect to thrive. Those farmers who have distinguished themselves, by a close attention to the pursuit of wise projects of agricultural improvement, have found their account abundantly in so doing. They have generally attained to considerable opulence, so as to be able to exhibit the appearance of wealthy independent country gentleman, instead of a servile, cringing yeomanry or tenantry. Not a few of them are supposed to live as well as their landlords: but the conduct of some of them towards the *poor* has been thought cruel and tyrannical.

Dairies are said to be here rather neglected, and the farmers' attention chiefly directed to tillage and the growing of corn. The *cheese* is for the most part very ordinary and poor; and the *butter* not excellent.—No part of England exceeds Norfolk, or even equals it, in the culture of *turnips*, for which its loose, light, and sandy soil is thought to be very favourable. Much dependence is here placed on the turnip crop, for subsisting the sheep and cattle during the winter season; and if it fail, or is materially injured by early frosts, or other means, the complaints become loud, and the consequences often prove serious and distressing.

The turnip was only cultivated in gardens, as a culinary plant in this country till the reign of George I. when Lord Townshend, an ancestor of the present marquis, who had attended the king to Hanover, as secretary

of state, observing the profit and utility of the field cultivation of turnips in that electorate, on his return brought with him the seed and recommended it to his tenants who occupied land of a similar quality to that of Hanover. The experiment succeeded adequate to expectation: the practice gradually spread over the county, and made its way into other parts of the kingdom. This important root, the great source of abundance to the county, has been gradually rising to its present state, for upwards of seventy years—A good acre of turnips in Norfolk will produce between thirty and forty cart-loads, as heavy as three horses can draw; and an acre will fat a Scotch bullock from forty to fifty stone, or eight sheep. But the advantage of this crop does not end here, for it generally leaves the land so clean and in such fine condition, that it almost insures a good crop of barley, and a kind plant of clover; and the clover is a most excellent preparative for wheat, so that in the subsequent advantages the value of the turnip can hardly be estimated. It has however been observed, that the cultivation of this root has reached its acme; and that at present, from some latent causes, it is on the decline: for recently more seed is become necessary, and the crop is said to be more precarious. Some have attributed it to the want of deeper ploughing, and instances have been adduced of the extraordinary depth to which turnips, and even *wheat* will radicate. This however has been thought insufficient to affix the cause of failure to shallow ploughing. †

† See Beauties of England, vol. XI, and Kent's View of Agriculture of Norfolk, p. 40, 41.

Among our enlightened agriculturists the first place is generally allotted to those of Norfolk; and it has been observed, that the first thing that attracts the eye of a stranger here, is the fine *tillth* of the soil, and the *succession* of crops. The mode of cultivating the arable lands is worthy, no doubt, of imitation, wherever it can be adopted. The plough, which is of an admirable construction, is drawn by two horses harnessed abreast, which with a pair of reins are guided by the person who holds the plough. Instead of working the animals seven or eight hours without drawing bit, as is the custom in some counties, they are here worked eight hours in winter, and ten in Summer, by two journeys, as they are termed, which enables them to do considerably more than they would by one journey. The ploughings are repeated till the land is high in *tillth*, when it is completely pulverized with *wheeled* drags and harrows, which are violently drawn by the horses being kept upon a *trotting* pace. Owing to this rapid movement, the clods are very effectually broken, and the land well prepared to receive the seed. After this is sown or planted, the utmost attention is paid to keep the land free from weeds. The ridiculous custom of letting the land lie *idle* one year in every three, for the advantage of what is termed *fallowing*, is here properly exploded. The necessity of it has been superceded, and the reasons of it done away by a judicious course of *cropping*; so that one crop may fertilize as the other exhausts; and in this manner are the lands cultivated like gardens, yielding various crops in perpetual succession, to the mutual benefit of the landlord and tenant; and of general utility to the public.



The mode of cropping in general practice is what is termed a *sixcourse shift*—the first year wheat; second, barley, with or without clover; third, turnips; fourth, barley or oats, with or without clover; fifth, clover mown for hay; sixth, grazed and ploughed up for wheat again. Some vary this mode by a five or a four course shift. Wheat is a general crop over the whole county, but thrives best on the stiff loamy lands. The lighter soils are favourable to barley, vast quantities of which are raised, malted, and in that state sent out of the county. Both wheat and barley are principally either drilled, for which several kinds of ingeniously-contrived *barrow-drills* are used, or else planted with the hand by women and children, called *dibbling*. The latter is among the agricultural improvements that have originated in this county: it is very generally practised, and its superiority, in several respects, or circumstances, over the other methods has been generally admitted. The quantities produced, according to the seed sown, are very unequal in different parts of the county. Lands, in the hundred of Flegg and Marshland, usually bear six quarters of wheat per acre, and ten of oats; but in the very light soils, the farmer is glad to obtain two quarters of oats, and three of barley. The average crops of the whole county may be stated at three quarters of wheat, and four of barley, and other articles in proportion, per acre.” \* Oats are mostly sown only as a shifting crop, and seldom more is raised than what are consumed within the county. Other crops are rye,

\* Kent's General View—and Beauties of England, as before.

buck wheat, peas, beans, vetches or tares, coleseed, clovers, rye and other artificial grasses; burnet, cocksfoot, chickary, cabbages, mangel wurzel, luzerne, carrots, and potatoes. The latter, though so valuable a root, and in other parts used as a preparatory crop for wheat, has not lately been adopted as a field course in Norfolk \* *Flax* and *hemp*, and even *mustard* and *saffron* are grown in some parts about Marshland and the Fens.—Improved implements and machines, to facilitate the operations of husbandry, are here in the greatest variety and perfection. *Threshing machines* are become general throughout the county, as are also *drills* of all kinds; but a *drill-roller* has been supposed to be peculiar to Norfolk. It is a large cast-iron cylinder, with projecting rings round it, at about ten inches distance from each other. This being drawn over the ploughed land makes indentations, and the seed sown *broad-cast* chiefly falls into the drills, and is thus regularly and better deposited than in the common mode of sowing.—Among *wheel-carriages* the non descript one called a *wizzard*, or *hermaphrodite*, is curious and remarkable; it is the common cart, to which in harvest, or in pressing circumstances, a couple of temporary forewheels are placed under the shafts, and two oblique ladders to the frame, by which it is made to answer the purpose of a waggon: in little farms, it is an object of no small utility, and in large ones a great help in a busy season. †

\* Kent's General View—Beauties of England, as before.

† Ibid.

The fat cattle of these parts, except those sold at home to the butchers, are commonly sent up to London, and sold in Smithfield Market, by the authorized and sworn salesmen of that place, who regularly remit the money afterwards to the respective owners, to their entire satisfaction; for no murmurs against these salesmen, or reflections unfavourable to their integrity are ever heard. One man, commonly called *a drover*, generally takes charge of the disposable cattle of a whole district, and among them sometimes very fierce beasts, that would prove unmanageable to most other people, but which he contrives to drive along with tolerable ease, assisted only by a trusty and well-trained *dog*, his sagacious and constant companion.

The country eastward of Lynn, towards Westacre and Swaffham, soon becomes more and more elevated and hilly: the soil also, in many places, is of a very inferior sort—and so light, loose, and sandy, as to be easily, in its ploughed state, drifted by the wind; for which the *marl*, that abounds about those parts, is the very best manure, and almost the only effectual remedy; and it is generally nigh at hand; often but a few feet beneath the surface, and under the very soil that wants it. It is usually laid on very thick, and seldom disappoints the farmer's wish or expectation, unless the soil be so incurably sterile as not to admit the marl's incorporating with it. Wonderful effects have often been produced by this marling, upon lands that many would have deemed of invincible sterility.



Not far from the last mentioned town of Swaffham, between Watton and Merton, is a place called *Wayland Wood*, which gives name to the Hundred in which it lies. It is commonly called *Wailing Wood*, and tradition has marked it out as the scene of the pitiable, miserable, and horrid catastrophe recorded and commemorated in the old and well-known ballad of "The Children in the Wood; or the Norfolk Gentleman's last will and testament." The origin of the tradition, or the time when that shocking event happened, cannot now, it seems, be ascertained. Even Blomefield, with all his antiquarian sagacity, and extensive means of information, was not able to find it out. It was probably the occurrence of a very distant period: but that it really did happen, the ballad and the tradition may be considered as very sufficient proofs; and the latter renders it very probable, or rather more than probable, that Wayland, or Wailing Wood was the very theatre of its perpetration. Of the untimely and tragical ends of helpless and friendless orphans, by the procurement of unprincipled, unfeeling, and cruel relations, who were heirs to their possessions, the history of rude and barbarous ages furnish but too many and very shocking examples; and it is devoutly to be wished that nothing of the kind, or nothing equally inhuman and shocking, could be said of the history of what are usually called civilized and enlightened times.

At Saham Tony, not far from Watton and Wayland Wood, lived in the last century a remarkable person of the name of *Shuckforth*. He was a gentleman of good

property, and resided there on his own estate. On some occasion, unknown to the present writer, he retired from the world many years before he died, and gave himself up to reading and meditation, and to the practice of piety and charity. His religion appeared to be of that cast that is usually and assumingly denominated orthodox and evangelical, with no slight tincture of credulity, superstition, and fanaticism. These, however, as his life was otherwise so inoffensive and fruitful of good works, lost in him a great part of their deformity. His oddities and eccentricities induced many of his neighbours, of the higher orders, to impute to him a strong twist of insanity; while a great part of their own conduct would have gone, perhaps, quite as far in supporting a similar imputation against themselves. A course of life so singular, unfashionable, and unadmired, as that which he chose and pursued, might excite in many no small degree of surprize and disgust, but it ought not to be taken as a proof of mental derangement. It was probably the result of the sober exercise of his private judgement, and of a full conviction that there was no other course in which he could so well serve God and his fellow creatures, or promote his own present and future happiness. He was seldom seen for many of his latter years, except by a few domestics, one of whom was a constant attendant, and employed to read to him, after his own eyesight had failed. He is also supposed to have been the chief agent to distribute his charities, in the mean time, among the neighbouring poor and indigent. Close to his house he had a lime-kiln erected, from an idea

that the smell, or effluvia of burning lime conduced to health and longevity. Thus he passed his time, in innocent and useful retirement, during a great part of a very long life. May his opulent survivors imitate his benevolence and charitable actions, whatever they may think of his peculiarities. He died in 1781, in his 91st. year, and was buried in one of his own fields, in a spot which he had fixed upon, and enclosed for that purpose, near twenty years before; and where he had erected a tomb, or a kind of mausoleum, with a long inscription on each of its four sides, or on four different stones. The inscriptions, as to the style and substance of them, have no great merit. They possess no elegance; and may be very truly said to be far more fanciful than judicious. But of the writer's good intention, no doubt ought to be entertained. As he had in his lifetime distinguished himself by numerous acts of benevolence, so at his death, and by his will, he left divers charitable donations to the poor of Saham and the neighbouring parishes. Thus did he, in life and in death, remember the poor, and maintain the character of the poor man's friend. The blessing of the poor, and of those who were ready to perish he doubtless obtained, and even the blessing and approbation of Him who is the common parent, benefactor, and righteous judge of the rich as well as the poor, the creator, sustainer, and ruler of the universe.

The parish churches on this side the Ouse, for the most part, make but a mean appearance, compared with those of Marshland and Holland. Here are, however, and always have been other edifices greatly superior to any



thing of the kind found in those districts: that is, the sumptuous mansions and palaces, for which this county has been long remarkable, and not inferior, perhaps, to any part of the kingdom. Of these, the most distinguished, in former times, were, *Rising Castle*, once a royal palace, and the residence, for many years, of queen *Isabel*, the relict of Edward II; *Gaywode Castle*, the principal mansion, for some ages, of the bishops of Norwich, and one of the best houses, in the meantime, if not the very best, in the whole county; *Middleton Castle*, the seat of Lord Scales; *Wormegay Castle*, the seat of lord Bardolf; *Castleacre*, the seat of Earl Warren; and *Hunstanton Hall*, the seat of the Lestranges.

Among the modern mansions, or palaces, in these parts, the most distinguished is that of Lord Cholmondeley, at *Houghton*, built by the famous Sir Robert Walpole; that of Thomas William Coke Esq. at *Holkham*; and that of Lord Townshend, at *Rainham*. Besides these, there are many others worthy of notice; such as that of Mr. Henley, at *Sandringham*; that of Mr. Styleman, at *Snettisham*; that of Mr. Rolfe, at *Hitcham*; that of Mr. Coldham, at *Anmer*; that of Sir Martin Browne Folkes, at *Hillington*; that of Mr. Hamond, at *Westacre*; that of Mr. Fountaine, at *Narford*; that of Mr. Tyssen, at *Narborough*; that of Sir Richard Bedingfield, at *Oxborough*; that of Mr. Pratt, at *Ruston*; that of Mr. Hare, at *Stowe*; that of Mr. Bell, at *Wallington*; and that of Mr. Plestow, at *Wallington*; to which several others might be added; but most, if not all of them, are of inferior consideration.

SECTION II. *A further Account of the Castles, edifices, and places of ancient note, in these parts—Brancaster—Rising—Gaywood—Middleton—Wormegay—Castle-acre, &c.*

RISING, or, as it is commonly called, *Castle-Rising*, is generally considered as the most ancient of all places in this vicinity, except Brancaster, † with which it might originally have some connection. It is supposed to have existed in the time of the Romans, as one of their military posts, or inferior stations, which Spelman thought not improbable, from its situation, and the coins there discovered. But it seems by no means clear, or certain, that it is a place of so much greater antiquity than Lynn, as is generally supposed. As a borough, it may, and seems to be the most ancient of the two; but that its origin, as a town, was much, if at all, anterior to that of Lynn, is not so very probable or indubitable as most people have imagined. That it is a place of great antiquity, must however be al-

† Brancaster was one of those forts erected by the Romans along the Icenian coast, to guard the country against the incursions of the piratical Saxons, who used to infest this coast long before they obtained any footing in the country, and while it formed a part of the Roman Empire. From their frequent hostile visits, this coast was called *the Saxon shore*. The forts along the coast (the chief of which was Brancaster, —to which Rising might be a kind of appendage,) were garrisoned by a strong body of cavalry, called the *Dalmatian horse*, whose superior, or commander in chief, was denominated the *Count of the Saxon shore*; and sometimes *Branodunensis*, from *Branodunum*, the Roman or Latin name of Brancaster.—Brancaster is now an obscure village, exhibiting no vestige of its ancient dignity, except some entrenchments, or earth-works, the remains of a Roman Camp, including, as Camden says, some eight acres; which the neighbours call Caster—All whose dimensions, according to his annotator, agree with the Roman models, in Cesar's Commentaries.—See Gibson's Camden, 391, 398.

lowed, as well as that it was formerly of far greater extent, population, and consequence, than it is at present, and than it has been for several ages; otherwise it could, surely, never have acquired the rank of a corporate town, with distinct municipal laws, chartered rights, and the privilege of sending members to parliament—even as many as the county itself: which must always have been absurd enough, but especially at this time, when it is actually one of the most inconsiderable villages within the whole county. It is said to have been formerly a noted sea-port; but the silt and sand, choking up its harbour, have long deprived it of that advantage. To that cause the decay of the town is, probably, to be ascribed. Spelman says, that Rising is a burgh of such high antiquity, that the royal archives and records give no account of it. But may it not be questioned, if his premises will really warrant his conclusion? or, if the silence of the archives and records amounts to a proof of its high antiquity, as a burgh? Might not that silence be owing to some other cause? and may it not be concluded, that the origin of some burghs, of which those archives and records give an account, is yet more ancient than that of Rising?

In its better times, Rising had two weekly markets, Mondays and Thursdays; and also a fair, or free mart, for fifteen days, from the feast of St. Matthew. But they have been long discontinued, and it is doubtful, if any one now can tell when that happened. Rising has now neither market nor fair, except a paltry, peddling merrimake, on or about Mayday; the miserable



remnant, probably, of the fifteen days mart. Formerly the town was governed by a mayor, recorder, twelve aldermen, a speaker of the commons, and fifty (some say seventy) burgesses. At present the Corporation consists of two aldermen, who alternately serve the office of mayor, and return two members to parliament, the mayor being the returning officer. The burgage tenures are the property of Mr Howard, and Lord Cholmondeley; and though five or six names generally appear upon the poll, at an election for members of parliament, it is said to be very doubtful, whether there is a single *legal voter* belonging to the burgh, except the rector. \* The arms are a *Castle triple towered*. We are told that this burgh first sent numbers to parliament in 1558.

The Church of Rising is an ancient pile, dedicated to St Lawrence, and built in the conventual form, with a tower between the body of it and the chancel, which last is now in ruins; the walls only of part of it being standing; also a south cross aisle, joining to the tower, which is entirely in ruins. The west end is adorned with antique carving, and small arches; the roof of the church is flat, covered with lead.—Near the east end of the churchyard stands an hospital, built by Henry Howard, earl of Northampton, in the reign of James I. It is a square building, containing twelve apartments for twelve poor women, and one good room for the governess, with a spacious hall and kitchen, and a decent chapel. It is endowed with 100*l* a year, out of lands in Rising, Roydon, S. and N. Wootton, and Gay.

\* See Norfolk Tour, and Parkin,

wood; also with 5*l.* every fifth year, toward keeping it in repair, from an hospital in Greenwich, founded also by the said earl of Northampton, and commonly called *Norfolk College*, for a Warden and twenty pensioners, of whom twelve must be parishioners of Greenwich, and eight of Rising and Shotisham in Norfolk, whose allowance is eight shillings a week for commons, besides clothes, lodging, and salaries, which are varied at the discretion of the managers. The whole income of the said college, or hospital, amounts to about 1100*l.* yearly. †—The allowance at Rising hospital is eight shillings a month for each pensioner, and twelve shillings for the Governess, with some addition on certain saints days, or festivals; also one chaldron of coals yearly for each, and two for the governess. Each has also a new gown every year, with a livery-gown, and hat, every seventh year.—The pensioners must be all single women, of an unblemished character, and free from all suspicion of heresy, blasphemy, and atheism. A further account of this institution may be seen in the different histories of the county.

The *Castle* of Rising is of much more modern origin than the town itself. It is supposed to have been built about the middle of the 12th century, by William de Albini, first Earl of Sussex, and Son of another William de Albini, who was butler to William Rufus, and to whom that king had made a grant of Rising, upon the defection or rebellion of his uncle Odo, bishop of

† Beauties of England. 7, 505.

Bayeux and Earl of Kent, to whom his brother, the conqueror, had granted it, upon the forfeiture and seizure of the vast temporalities of Stigand archbishop of Canterbury, in whose possession it was before the conquest. The Earl of Sussex is said to have been one of the most celebrated warriors of the age in which he lived, and to have married *Adeliza* the dowager queen of Henry I. from which last circumstance the Castle of Rising appears to have been from the very first a royal palace. This Castle and lordship continued in the Albini family till the death of Earl *Hugh*, in 1243, when they went, together with the fourth part of the Tollbooth of Lynn, to Roger de Montalto, lord of Montalt, (in Flintshire) by his marriage to Cecily, fourth daughter and coheirress of William Earl of Sussex, and one of the Sisters of Earl Hugh, who made it his chief seat, and place of residence. It continued afterward, with all its appurtenances, in the Montalto family, till the death of Robert Lord Montalt, in 1329, when Emma his widow surrendered and conveyed them, with all her other possessions and castles, agreeable to a former deed, executed in the life time of her husband, to the dowager queen *Isabel*, the mother of Edward III. In 1330, soon after the trial and execution of her great favourite Mortimer, the Castle of Rising became the chief place of that queen's residence, and continued to be so ever after to the time of her death, in 1358, when it descended to her grandson, Edward the black prince; but it does not appear that he ever resided there, though it seems very probable that he had been there often in the time of his grandmother. In the second year of the



reign of his son, Richard II. it was granted by that king to John Montfort, surnamed the valiant, Earl of Richmond, and Duke of Britany (the husband of his half sister *Jean*) in exchange for the town and castle of Brest. On the defection of Montfort, about twelve years after, the king gave it to his uncle Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester; who being murdered at Calais, in 1398, Edmund of Langley, Duke of York, another of the king's uncles, obtained a grant of it, with the manors of Beeston, Mileham, &c. in Norfolk; and at his death, in 1403, it came to his eldest son Edward, Duke of York; who being slain in the memorable battle of Agincourt, it came to his brother Richard Earl of Cambridge; and he being beheaded the same year, it fell to the Crown, where it remained till the 36th of Hen. VIII. when it was granted, with its manor and appurtenances, together with the manors of Thorpe, Gaywood, South Walsham, &c. &c. to Thomas Howard Duke of Norfolk, and Henry his Son, Earl of Arundel and Surry, in exchange for the manors of Walton, Trimley, Falkenham, &c. &c. On the attainder of the Duke of Norfolk, in 15th Elizabeth, it came again to the crown, and was granted to Edward, Earl of Oxford; but this grant being soon revoked, it was then granted to Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, brother to the said Duke; and it seems to have continued in the Howard family ever since, together with its appurtenances, with the exception of a small farm, which was purchased by Sir Robert Walpole, and is now in the possession of his descendant, the present Lord

Cholmondeley, which secures him a moiety of the influence, or command of the borough, in the election of members of Parliament. Among the titles of the Duke of Norfolk is that of *baron, or lord Howard, of Castle Rising*.

The Castle, as Parkin observes, stands upon a hill, on the south side of the town, from whence is a fine prospect over land and an arm of the sea. Great part of the walls of the keep, or inward tower, are still standing, being a gothic pile, much resembling that of Norwich, and little inferior; the walls are about three yards thick, consisting chiefly of freestone, with [some] iron, or car stone; encompassed with a great circular ditch, and bank of earth, on which stood also a strong stone wall, as appears by a presentment, in 31st Elizabeth, when the wall on the said bank was said to be in part, and the rest in danger of being, overthrown, by the warrener's conies. This ditch, now dry, was formerly, probably, filled with water. There is but one entrance to it, [which is] on the eastside, over a strong stone bridge, about thirty paces long, and eight or nine broad, supported by a single arch, over which stood a gatehouse. The inward part of the castle, or keep, is all in ruins, except the room, where the court leet of that lordship is held." The appartments were doubtless grand and sumptuous when queen Isabel resided here, and when her son the great king Edward III. and his queen and court were among her guests. A house resorted to by the very first personages in the kingdom, or in Europe, and which could furnish suitable accomoda-

tion and entertainment for them, may well be supposed to have been both capacious and commodious, as well as fitted up in a style of superior elegance and magnificence. Some of our historians say, that the king used to visit his mother here, once or twice annually, for many years.

In 1340, the king and queen were here for some time, as appears from the account rolls of Adam de Reffham, and John de Newland, of Lynn, who sent his majesty, in the mean while, a present of wine. In the summer of that year workmen were employed at the Castle in making preparations, and the queen sent her precept to the Mayor of Lynn, for eight carpenters to assist on the occasion. Afterward, in 1344, the King and his court were here for sometime, as appears from certain Letters which he sent from hence to the bishop of Norwich, then at Avignon, to be there delivered by him to the Pope. On the 22nd August, 1358, queen Isabel died at this Castle; and in November following her remains were taken to London, and buried there in the Church of the Grey Friars, now called Christ Church, where also (it seems) her favourite Mortimer had been buried.

It is somewhat remarkable, that few of our historians seem to know where this queen resided during the last 28 years of her life, or to have the least idea of this Castle being ever the place of her residence. Rapin, and Hume, and also the author, or authors of the Parliamentary history, call the place of her habitation or



confinement, "Rising Castle, *near London*," (they should have said, *near Lynn*,) and Petit Andrews calls it "the castle of *Risings, in Surry*;" whereas it is a most unquestionable fact, that it was no other than this very castle of *Rising in Norfolk*, which was formerly, as we have seen, a place of no small note and consequence. But its best days are past, and its glory is departed.

Of HUNSTON, or *Hunstanton Hall*, not much is known that is worth recording. It was long the chief seat and residence of the ancient family of the Lestranges; of which the most notable person, perhaps, was the famous *Sir Roger Lestrangle*, who wrote and published more books than most of his contemporaries; of some of which he was himself the author, of others the translator only. He was also among our earliest editors of Newspapers, and always a flaming church-and-kingman. Queen Mary the second is said to have anagrammed his name into *Strange lying Roger*. Hunston House, or Hall, is now uninhabited, and in ruins; and is the property of Mr Styleman of Snettisham, a descendant of the Lestranges by the female line.

CASTLEACRE was formerly the principal seat and residence of the great *Earls Warren*, who lived here in all the rude pomp and feudal splendor which distinguished the great Norman barons, whom the conqueror introduced into this country, and who largely shared in the fortunes of their successful leader. The 11th 12th and 13th centuries were the times when the *Earls Warren* flourished most. King Edward I. was entertained at this Castle in 1297, by the then *Earl War-*

ren, who was one of the most powerful among the English nobility of that time. The first English peer of that name was nearly allied to the conqueror, and accompanied him hither. He died in 1089. He that was the founder of Castleacre is said to have owned no less than one hundred and forty lordships, or manors, in Norfolk alone; and yet, among them all, no spot pleased him so well as Castleacre; and therefore he determined to fix there his chief residence, and to erect an edifice suitable to his high rank and vast possessions. This Castle, or Palace, stood on a rising ground, including, with all its outworks and fortifications, about eighteen acres of ground, in a circular form. Through this there is now a way, or street, called Baily Street, running directly north and south. At the entrance of this street, on the north, stands a stone gate-house, with two round bastions. The gate-house had an inward and outward door, with a portcullis in the middle. A similar gate-house is supposed to have stood at the opposite, or south entrance. On the east side of the north gate was a chapel for the Castle, the walls of which are still standing; and on the east side of the said street, near the middle, was another stone gate-house, leading into the outward court of the great Castle, which was circular, enclosed with a strong and lofty wall, of freestone and flint, &c. embattled, seven feet thick. Further in is a deep ditch, and a lofty embattled wall round it. Within this is the keep; and across the ditch are three lofty walls at proper distances, which join the Castle wall, as buttresses &c. The other part of the fortifications, on the west side of Baily Street, is called the Bar-

bican, and contains above ten acres of land, and was enclosed with deep ditches, entrenchments, and high ramparts.—Several coins of Vespasian, Constantine &c. have been found here, and the spot is supposed to have been originally a Roman station. From the North part of it there is said to run a way, by Castleacre Wicken, and from thence across the country, leaving Massingham and Houghton on the right, and Anmer on the left; then tending in a direct course, leaving Fring a little on the right, for Ringstead and Brancaster, which latter is known to have been a considerable Roman station. This way is said to be commonly called the Pedder's Way, and probably went much further than Castleacre, even as far, at least, as Castor by Norwich, the Venta Icenorum of antiquity.—From the beauty of the situation of Castleacre, and the noble ruins at present remaining, of which the semicircular wall of the Castle is a very grand and striking part, the late Earl of Leicester, at one time, as it is said, entertained an idea of building there: a situation which has been judged every way superior to that of Holkham, which he afterward fixed upon. His Lordship has been by some much blamed on this occasion; justly or not, cannot be made here a subject of inquiry.—A little to the west of the Castle stood the ancient *Priory* of Castleacre; which was a building of great note for many ages. The priory church was a large venerable gothic pile, built in a cathedral or conventual form: the principal entrance was through a great arch, over which was a stately window; on each side of the great door were other doors to enter into the north and south aisles



under the tower, as the grand door served as an entrance into the nave or body; at the north and south end of this front or west end, stood two towers, supported by strong arches, or pillars; the nave, or body, had twelve great pillars, making seven arches on each side, the lowest joining to the towers; on the east end of the nave stood the grand tower supported by four great pillars, through which was the entrance into the choir: on the south and north side of this tower were two cross aisles or transepts, and at the end of the north transept there seems to have been a chapel, or vestiary. The choir was of an equal breadth with the nave and aisles, but much shorter, and at the east end of it was in form of a chapel, and here stood the high altar.—The cloister was on the south side, and had an entrance at the west end, and another at the east end of the south aisle, The chapter house joined to the east side, and the dormitory was over the west part of the cloister, and adjoining was the prior's apartment.

Castleacre was purchased, of his relations the Cecils, by lord chief justice Coke, and is now the property of his descendant, Thomas Wm. Coke Esq. of Holkham.

Of WIRMEGAY, or WORMEGAY CASTLE but little seems to be known at present, save that it was long the seat or residence of the Lords *Bardolf*, who had great possessions, and bore no small sway for a long time in these parts, This Castle of theirs appears to have been a place of considerable strength and consequence. King Edward II. in his 18th year, is said to have sent his precept to Lord Bardolf, to have great care and guard

of it, on account of the supposed approach of his queen and his enemy Mortimer; as he also did to Lord Montalt in regard to his Castle of Rising; which seems to imply, that they were two of the most important places then in these parts.

MIDDLETON CASTLE \* was long the chief seat of the Lords *Scales*, descended from Hardewin, or Harlewin de Scalariis, lord of Waddon in Cambridgeshire, probably one of the conqueror's favorite captains. The first footing which that family had at Middleton is supposed to have been in the reign of Henry II. by the marriage of Roger de Scales, with Muriel, daughter and coheiress of Jeffrey de Lisewis. The family afterward resided here, and had great possessions and power in these parts, for many generations. At what time the Castle was built is not known; but it was, probably, in the time of the said Roger, or at an early part of the residence of that family in this neighbourhood. It continued in the Scales family till the reign of Edward IV. when it passed into that of the Wodeviles, by the marriage of the memorable Anthony Wodevile Earl Rivers, and Elizabeth the heiress of Thomas the last Lord Scales. After the fall of the Wodeviles, it is said to have been granted, by Richard III. to the Duke of Norfolk. At the accession of Henry VII. being forfeited with the Duke's other possessions, it went to the heiress of the Scales, in the person of the countess of Oxford. Afterward it passed by marriage to the Lord Latimer, and thence, from time to time, into

\* Otherwise *Titherington Hall*.

other hands; such as Sir Edward Williams, Sir Roger Mostyn, &c. Of this ancient Castle nothing now remains but the gate-house, or tower, which is still pretty entire, and seems to have been the entrance into a court, or quadrangle, which was moated in. This tower is built of brick, about seventeen yards long, nine broad, and eighteen high, with turrets, &c. Over the arch is the shield of Scales; the inside of it is much decayed; the area, or court within is about eighty four paces long, and forty six broad. The situation is low and swampy, and what would not now be deemed very eligible for the habitation or residence of a noble or genteel family. The power and possessions of the Scales were formerly very great in these parts:

GAYWOOD CASTLE stood where the farm house, called Gaywood Hall, now stands, as appears from the *moat* which surrounds it, and which must once have encircled a fortified edifice. That edifice could be no other than the castle or palace of Gaywood, which was long the favourite, or principal mansion and residence of the bishops of Nórwich, who were from an early period the temporal as well as spiritual lords of Lynn; on which account the town was then called Bishop's Lynn, or Lynn Bishop. So high and mighty was the bishop's lordly sway then at Lynn, that the very Mayor was nominated and appointed by him, and was called *the bishop's man*, being in fact only his bailiff, or deputy. Afterward, the Mayor's power becoming more extensive and independent, would sometimes occasion no



small disagreement and strife between him and his prelatical master: a very notable instance of which occurred in the reign of Richard II. and the time of the famous bishop *Spencer*, of persecuting, fighting, and crusading memory. This prelate, being one day in the town with his retinue, quarrelled with the Mayor (who was supported by the townsmen) on a point of frivolous etiquette. From words, the parties came to blows; and a very serious battle ensued, which terminated in the total defeat of the haughty prelate and his company, who were all driven out of town, many of them much bruised and wounded. This bishop *Spencer* was sometime after appointed generalissimo of Pope *Urban's* forces, in the war he then waged against the antipope *Clement* of Avignon; as is related by Fox. It was he also who afterward prosecuted for heresy William Sawtre, then minister of St Margaret's, and the first who suffered under the Act *De hæretico comburendo*. Of these matters a more particular account shall be given in relating the history of the town, at that period.

The bishops having so much to do at Lynn, and deriving from it so much of their consequence, it was natural for them to choose to reside in its vicinity: hence the origin of the castle, or palace of Gaywood. At what time it was first built cannot now perhaps be ascertained. We are told that bishop John de Grey (about 1200, or soon after) erected, or rebuilt, a sumptuous palace here, for himself and successors, where he much resided. Succeeding bishops continued to reside here, and to pay attention to the improvement of the grounds,

as well as of the palace. A deer park, and a warren, appear to have been made here by bishop William de Raleigh, about 1240; who also granted liberty of common pasture to the Earl of Arundel and Sussex, and his men, from the park of Bawsey to the bridge of Gaywood, and the cawsey between the river of Bawsey and the wood of the said Earl. In 1388, bishop Spencer, abovementioned, had licence to embattle his palace of Gaywood. This seems to have been after his return from the crusade, or war, in which he had been engaged for Pope Urban, against his competitor Pope Clement, as he had been appointed commander in chief five years before. From the high spirit and wealth of this proud prelate, it may be presumed that Gaywood Castle made a very splendid and princely appearance in his time; and it is likely that the same might be the case long after, even till the reign of Henry VIII. when it was surrendered, together with the bishop's rights and immunities at Lynn, into the Kings hands. It was soon after, with its appurtenances, granted to the Duke of Norfolk, and then probably pulled down. Its site, and the adjoining estate passed afterward to the Thoresbys of Haveless hall, in Mintling; and from them to the Wyches, of Hockwold; and latterly to Philip Case Esq.—and now are the property of William Bagge Esq. of Lynn. Of the castle, or palace of Gaywood, no more needs now be said, but that it is fallen, never more, in all probability, to rise, or recover the least portion of its ancient splendor and consequence.

Besides the castles, or palaces above mentioned, there were formerly in this country many religious houses, of different orders, and some of them of considerable note: among which were Blackburgh priory, in Middleton; Castleacre priory; Westacre priory; Crabhouse nunnery, by Maudlin; West Dereham Abbey; Flitcham priory; Massingham priory, and Pentney priory. Of these some were extensive and noble edifices, and had large possessions attached to them; but scarce any remains of most of them are now to be seen, and their very memory seems to be approaching fast towards oblivion. Such is the fate of the firmest fabrics: like those who constructed them, they were composed of perishing materials.

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SECTION III. *Further Account of the modern palaces, and other notable mansions in this country.—Houghton—Holkham—Rainham—Narford—Narborough—Oxborough.*

Of all the fine houses that now exist in this vicinity, and even throughout all the eastern parts of England, the precedence, in point of size and magnificence at least, is allowed to be due to

HOUGHTON HALL, now the princely seat of the Earl of Cholmondeley, but formerly of the Earls of Orford, of the Walpole family, from which the present possessor is maternally descended. This Splendid



Mansion was built by the memorable Sir Robert Walpole, while he was prime minister, and between the years 1722 and 1735. The whole extent of the building, including the Colonnade and wings, which contain the offices, is four hundred and fifty feet: the main body of the house extends one hundred and sixty six feet. The whole building is of stone, and crowned with an entablature of the Ionic order, on which is a balustrade, At each corner is a Cupola, surmounted with a lanthorn. For a description of the inside of the house, the reader is referred to the Norfolk Tour and other printed accounts. It has been long distinguished for its noble *Collection of pictures*, by the best masters; but it is no longer there; it was sold in 1779 to the late Empress of Russia, for 45,500*l*. Its removal out of the kingdom has been, much regretted, as a very humiliating circumstance, and a national disgrace; and it has been thought that the legislature ought to have purchased it, rather than suffer it to be taken out of the kingdom. But it is unavailing now to lament: that celebrated collection is irrecoverably lost to Britain. Sometime before the removal of those pictures Lord Orford gave Mr Boydell permission to take drawings of them, which he proposed having engraved by the first artists, and published in fourteen numbers, at two guineas each, which has been since done.

The duke of Lorrain, afterward Emperor of Germany, and husband to Maria Theresa, was once entertained by Sir Robert Walpole, at Houghton, with more than British magnificence.—Relays of horses were, in the

mean-time, provided on the roads, to bring rarities thither from the remotest parts of the kingdom, with all possible speed: and this extraordinary expedient, it seems, was continued all the while that august guest staid at Houghton. Sir Robert's expences, in buildings and entertainments, must have been so very great, that one is apt to wonder how he could manage to bear them; but he was a prime minister, and prime ministers are supposed capable of doing great things in the pecuniary way, without embarrassing themselves. One of Sir Robert's successors, however, a late prime minister, seems to have been an exception to that idea: with ample means, and without any great apparent outgoings, (except what his private revels, or midnight orgies, might cost him) he could by no means manage to live, or keep out of debt, and actually died insolvent!—Circumstances so dissimilar in the history of two men who stood in the same situation, must needs be deemed somewhat odd and remarkable.

The woods, or plantations, about Houghton are extensive, and thought very fine. “In the road from Syderstone (says the Author of the *Norfolk Tour*) they appear we think to the greatest advantage; they are seen to a great extent, with openings left judiciously in many places, to let in the view of more distant woods; which changes the shade, and gives them that solemn brownness which has always a great effect. The flatness of the country, however, is a circumstance which, instead of setting them off, and making them appear larger than they really are, gives them a diminutive air,

in comparison to the number of acres really planted. For were these vast plantations disposed upon ground with great inequalities of surface, such as hills rising one above another, or vast slopes stretching away to the right and left, they would appear to be almost boundless, and shew twenty times the extent they do at present. The woods which are seen from the south front of the house, are planted with great judgment, to remedy the effect of the country's flatness; for they are so disposed as to appear one beyond another, in different shades, and to a great extent."—Next to Houghton (if that expression may be allowed) the very best house in all this part of the kingdom is

HOLKHAM HOUSE, the splendid Seat and residence of Thomas William Coke, Esq. the far-famed patron of the Norfolk agriculturists, and one of the representatives of the county in this and several of the preceding parliaments. Mr Coke is also a descendant of the famous Lord chief justice of that name, who was himself a Norfolk man. Holkham is not of so long standing as Houghton: it was begun in 1734 by the Earl of Leicester and completed by his dowager countess in 1760. "The central part of this spacious mansion, built of white brick, is accompanied by four wings, or pavilions, which are connected with it by rectilinear corridors, or galleries: each of the two fronts therefore display a centre and two wings. The south front presents an air of lightness and elegance, arising from the justness of its proportions. In the centre is a bold portico, with its entablature supported by six co-



Corinthian columns. The north front is the grand or principal entrance, and exhibits different, though handsome features. The wings which partake of similar characteristics, have been thought to diminish from the general magnificence of the building, by the want of uniformity of style with the south front, and being too much detached to be consistent with unity. The centre, which extends 345 feet in length, by 180 in depth, comprises the principal apartments: each wing has its respective destination. One contains the kitchens, servants'-hall, and some sleeping rooms. In the chapel wing is the dairy, laundry, with more sleeping rooms. Another contains the suit of family apartments; and the fourth, called the strangers' wing, is appropriated to visitors.

This grand residence is rendered superior to most other great houses in the kingdom, by its *convenience* and appropriate arrangement. The entrance *hall*, which forms a cube, has a gallery round it, supported by twenty four Ionic columns. Next is the *saloon*, on each side of which is a drawing room; and connected to this is the *state dressing-room* and *bed chamber*. Another *drawing room* communicates with the *statue gallery*, which connects a number of apartments in a most admirable manner; for one octagon opens into the private wing, and the other into the strangers', on one side, and into the dining-room on the other. This dining-room is on one side of the hall; and on the other is Mrs. Coke's bed-room, dressing-room, and closets. From the recess, in the dining-room, opens a

door on the stair case, which immediately leads to the offices; and in the centre of the wings, by the saloon door, are invisible stair-cases, which lead to all the rooms and respective offices. Thus here are four general suits of apartments, all perfectly distinct from each other, with no reciprocal thoroughfares; the state, Mrs Coke's, the late earl's, and the strangers'. These severally open into what may be called common rooms, the statue gallery, and saloon, all which communicate with the dining room. There may be houses larger and more magnificent, and in some more uniformity and justness of proportion may be visible; but human genius could not contrive any thing in which convenience could be more apparent than in this. The fitting up of the interior is in the most splendid style, and, in numerous instances with the most elegant taste, The ceilings of many of the rooms are of curious gilt, fret, and mosaic work; the Venetian windows are ornamented with handsome pillars, and also profusely gilded. The marble chimney pieces are all handsome; but three are peculiarly deserving attention, for their exquisite sculpture. Two are in the dining-room, one ornamented with a sow and pigs, and a wolf; the other has a bear and bee hives, finely sculptured in white marble. A third, representing two pelicans, is exceedingly chaste and beautiful. The marble side-boards, agate-tables, rich tapestry, silk furniture, beds &c. are all in the same sumptuous style of elegance."

"The *Statue Gallery* consists of a central part and two octagonal ends. The first is seventy feet long, by

twenty two feet wide, and each octagon, of twenty two feet in diameter, opens to the centre, by an handsome arch. One end is furnished with books, and the other with statues, &c. Among the latter, the figure of *Diana* is extremely fine. A *Venus*, clothed with wet drapery, is considered exquisite. The Saloon is forty feet long, twenty eight wide, and thirty two in height. This room, appropriated for paintings, contains many by the most eminent masters; but they are not exclusively preserved in this; a vast collection being distributed over most of the apartments throughout the house.—In a brief statement it will be impossible to give a just and adequate delineation of the pleasure grounds and park, with the various objects which environ and decorate this museum of taste and seat of hospitality.” \* Nor would such a delineation be very necessary for this work, as but few of its readers can be supposed altogether unacquainted with the premises.—After *Holkham*, the next place is due to

*RAINHAM HALL*, the venerable seat and residence of the late *marquis Townshend*. This house is of a much longer standing than either of the former; being built, as we are told, about 1630, by Sir Roger Townshend, bart. under the direction of that excellent and celebrated architect *Inigo Jones*. Its situation has been supposed the most delightful in the county. The house itself, though it has been greatly improved by the late *marquis*, is said to be in the style of an exceeding good habitable mansion rather than a magnificent one. The

\* See *Beauties of England*, volume XI.



country around is rich, and charmingly cultivated. The park and woods are beautiful, and the lake below peculiarly striking. Extensive lawns, and opening views into the country, enrich the enlivening scene, and display the beauties and bounties of nature in their most enchanting and luxuriant pride.† Since the death of the late marquis this house has ceased to be the residence of the family.—To the preceding Mansions may be added

OXBOROUGH, or OXBURGH-HALL, the seat of the *Bedingfields*, which is said to present features of a striking kind, and to be a peculiar and interesting remnant of ancient domestic architecture. It was erected as long ago as the latter end of the fifteenth century, by *Sir Edmund Bedingfield*, who obtained a grant, or patent of Edward IV. in 1482, to build the manor house with towers, battlements, &c. It is built of brick, and was originally of a square form, environing a court, or quadrangle, one hundred and eighteen feet long, and ninety two broad; round which the apartments were ranged. The whole building resembles Queen's College, in Cambridge; a structure of about the same period. The entrance is over a bridge, formerly a draw-bridge, through an arched gate way, between two majestic towers, which are eighty feet high. In the western tower is a winding brick staircase beautifully turned, and lighted by quatrefoil ilet-holes. The other tower is divided into four stories; each consisting of an octagonal room, with arched ceilings, stone window

† Norfolk Tour.

frames, and stone fire places. Between the turrets is an arched entrance gateway, the roof of which is supported by numerous groins; and over this is a large handsome room, having one window to the north and two bow windows to the south. These windows, and the whole exterior of this part of the building appear to be in their original state. The floor of the great room is paved with small fine bricks, and the walls covered with very curious tapestry. This appears to be of the age of Henry VII. and is mentioned in several wills of the family. The apartment is called "the King's room," and is supposed to have been appropriated to the monarch just mentioned, when he visited Oxburgh. In the eastern turret is a curious small closet, called a *hiding place*, which appears to have been an original part of the structure: it is a cavity, or hollow in the solid wall, measuring six feet by five feet, and seven feet high, and is approached by a secret passage through the floor. A similar hiding place is said to have been destroyed in that part of the building which has been taken down. The great hall, which had an oaken roof, in the style of the justly admired one at Westminster Hall; and other rooms, which formed the south side of the court, were taken down in 1778, and the distribution of almost every apartment has been successively changed. The offices are now on the east side, and the dining parlour, drawing room, and library, on the west. The whole is surrounded by a moat, about fifty two feet broad, and ten feet deep, which is supplied with water from an adjacent rivulet. In the different apartments, which are both spacious and elegant,



are preserved a few good pictures, by eminent painters, and a collection of ancient armoury. \* This venerable seat is the property of Sir Richard Bedingfield, but at present the residence of Lord Mountjoy.

Of the other modern mansions in these parts, mentioned at the close of the first section of this chapter, it seems needless here to give any further account, except those of *Narford* and *Narborough*. These, it must be allowed, deserve a more particular attention; not on account of the structures themselves, but of the curious and valuable articles they contain—or lately did contain; for what did once so much distinguish *NARBOROUGH HALL*, is no longer there.—It was a noble collection of *ccins* and *medals*, ancient and modern; and the most valuable private collection, perhaps, in Britain, if not in Europe. Its possessor, the late Mr. Tyssen, assured this writer, that it had cost him, from first to last, above 20,000*l.* though he had been fortunate enough to purchase many of the most valuable articles much under the prices they usually fetch. In this collection were coins of the Grecian states and cities; a regular series of those of Philip and Alexander, of Alexander's successors, of the Ptolemies, and the Cæsars—all in gold, in the highest state of preservation, and of most exquisite workmanship, (all but those of the former part of Philip's reign, before he had become master of Greece, and could command the service of its artists,) and far exceeding the best of modern productions, except, perhaps, those of *Thomas Simon*, and *Dassier*, which come the nighest to the ancients. Many other curiosities were to be found at *Narborough*,

\* Beauties of England as before.



and not the least among them was a MS. copy of the *Eikon Basilike*, one of the most perfect specimens of fine penmanship extant, perhaps, on so large a scale. The pages, the lines, and the letters, were uniform, and exquisitely neat throughout. It was a quarto volume, and said to be written, or transcribed by I. THOMASEN, schoolmaster, at Tarvin, in the county palatine of Chester. He was said to have written three different copies, all in nearly equal perfection: of the other two, one is deposited in the King's library, and the other in the British Museum; but this was said to be the best of the three. To the best of this writer's recollection, Mr. Tyssen said, that it cost him a hundred guineas, nor did he seem to repent of his bargain. The price it fetched at the sale, however, fell greatly short of that sum.—An ancient shield, denoting and commemorating the taking of Carthage, was another of the late curiosities of Narborough: it represented one of the fair damsels of that devoted city, bearing the keys, and delivering them to Scipio, followed by a long train of the principal inhabitants, whose dejected and woeful looks, bespoke the grief and anguish that had then overwhelmed the Carthaginian nation.—Close to Narborough Hall is an old fortification, the remains of an ancient encampment, called the burgh; from whence to Oxburgh and Eastmore-fen, extends a large foss and rampart, whose original designation seems not very easy to discover.—In making a garden near the burgh, in 1600, several human bones and pieces of armour were found. This place is said to be peculiarly interesting to the antiquary; and it is supposed that a small

Roman station was once established here. John Brame, a monkish writer, in a manuscript history, quoted by Spelman in his *Icenia*, says, that Narborough was a British city, governed by an earl *Okenard*, about the year 500, when it stood a seven months siege against a king *Waidy*: but little reliance, however, can be placed on such authority. In the adjoining parish of *Narford*, numerous Roman bricks and other relics, are said to have been found: also a large brass vase, or urn, was dug up in the court yard of the manor house,

NARFORD HALL, the seat of Andrew Fountaine Esq. It was erected in the reign of George I. by the late Sir Andrew Fountaine, Knt. of whom some account will be given in the next section. He was a great collector of rarities, and made his house the repository of works of art and learning. At present it is said to display a choice collection of pictures, ancient painted earthenware, some bronzes, coins, and a fine library of books, supposed to be the best in the whole county. The room, in which these books are deposited, is forty feet by twenty one; and contains, beside the books, several Roman and Egyptian Vases, and portraits of eminent men. This library seems not to have been collected for mere ostentation. The original collector is said to have been a man of letters, as well as a connoisseur and virtuoso, and one, at least, of his successors has been reputed a literary character, and a proficient in some branches, especially *Spanish* literature; in which language the said library contains many rare and valuable articles, one of which he sometime ago

translated into english, and it has since made its appearance from the Swaffham Press.

Several springs of mineral water, of the chalybeate kind, are to be found in the neighbourhood of Lynn, on this eastern side; of which one is at Riffley, and another on Gaywood common, both within two miles of the town. There is also another beyond Setchey, on the Downham road. There are others in East Winch parish, one of which is much more strongly impregnated than any of the rest, and might, perhaps, be ranked, in point of medicinal virtue, with some of those springs that have acquired so much celebrity as to become places of considerable resort. This Spring is said to be strongly impregnated with what chymists and mineralogists call sulphate of iron.

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SECTION IV. *Biographical Sketches of some of the most celebrated, or memorable persons who were natives of this part of the country.*

Of all the eminent men who sprung up in this part of Norfolk, the precedence seems unquestionably due to

Sir EDWARD COKE, the famous Lord chief Justice. He was the Son of Robert Coke, Esq. of Mileham, where he was born in 1550, or as some say in 1549. At ten years of age he was sent to the free



school at Norwich; and after having spent there a competent time, he was removed to Trinity College in Cambridge, where he continued about four years, and then went to Clifford's Inn, and the next year was entered a student of the Inner Temple. He was called to the bar at six years standing, which in that age was held very extraordinary. Lloyd tells us that "the first occasion of his rise was his stating the Cook's case of the Temple, that all the house, who were puzzled with it, admired him; and his pleading it so, that the whole bench took notice of him." His reputation increased very fast, and he soon came into great practice. When he had been at the bar about seven years, he married a lady of one of the best families in his native county, and with a very large fortune for that age. He now rose rapidly: the cities of Coventry and Norwich chose him their Recorder; and he was engaged in all the great causes in Westminster Hall. He was also in high credit with Lord Burleigh and the other rulers, and often consulted in state affairs. He became moreover, one of the representatives of his native county in parliament, Speaker of the House of Commons, and successively Solicitor-general, Attorney-general, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, and finally, Lord Chief Justice of England, or rather *of the King's Bench*, as king James would have it called. Sir Edward was a high spirited man, and on many occasions discovered much firmness and integrity, even when the other judges gave way, and the mandates of the Sovereign required a different conduct. This kind of behaviour, in time, ren-

dered him obnoxious to the Court, and brought upon him its heavy displeasure, which issued in his expulsion from the Council Table, and his removal from the office of Lord Chief Justice; the king declaring, "That he was for a tyrant the fittest instrument that ever was in England." He afterward joined the country party, and made a distinguished figure among the great parliamentary patriots, in the latter part of the reign of James and the former part of that of Charles I. He died at his house at Stoke Pogey, in Buckinghamshire, Sept. 3, 1634, in the 86 year of his age, and expired with these words in his mouth, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done." He was one of the greatest Lawyers that England ever produced. He had quick parts, a deep penetration, a retentive memory, and a solid judgement. He was greatly honoured and esteemed among his brethren of the long robe; and when persecuted by the Court, and a brief was given against him to Sir John Walter, that gentleman, though Attorney-general to the prince, laid aside the brief, with this remarkable sentence, "Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, whenever I open it against Sir Edward Coke." He was observed to make a better figure in adversity than in prosperity; and he was so good at making the best of a disgrace, that king James said, "Let them throw him which way they would, he always fell upon his legs." He valued himself, and not without reason, upon this, that he obtained all his preferments without employing either prayers or pence, and that he became Speaker of the House of Commons, Solicitor-general, Attorney-general, Chief Justice of both Benches, High Steward of Cambridge,

and a member of the Privy Council, without either begging or bribing. In this he was very different from many of his most eminent cotemporaries, and especially from his great and celebrated rival Bacon, who was remarkable for the meanness with which he used to solicit preferment. He was in his person well proportioned, and his features were regular. He was neat, but not nice, in his dress; and would say, that "the cleanliness of a man's clothes ought to put him in mind of keeping all clean within." He was twice married, but his second marriage proved unhappy. He left behind him a numerous issue, as well as a large fortune; and may be ranked among the greatest men of his time.\*

In the latter part of his life he appears to have been among the reputed *Jacobins* of that day, [as is also said to have been the case, in the estimation of some wise and virtuous people, § with his present descendant of Holkham, during the late memorable reign and rage of our furious alarmists.] While he lay upon his death-bed, his house was, by an order of council, searched for seditious and dangerous papers: and the searchers took

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\* The following lines of his, quoted by Lord Teignmouth in his Life of Sir William Jones, is supposed to be expressive of the manner in which he distributed, or employed his time.

"Six hours in sleep, in Law's grave study Six,

Four spend in prayer, the rest on nature fix."

For which Sir William Jones is said to have substituted the following,

"Six hours to law, to soothing slumber seven,

Ten to the world allot, and all to heaven."

§ The worshipful kindred of *John Reeves*, and *John Bowles*; alias the pretended *Antijacobins*, who have been of late years such monstrous benefactors to this country, and to the world.



away his commentary upon Magna Charta; his commentary upon Lyttleton, with the history of his Life before it, written with his own hand; the Pleas of the Crown; and the Jurisdiction of Courts; his 11th. and 12th. Reports, in MS; with 51 other MSS; together with his Last Will and Testament, which contained the provision he had been making for his younger grandchildren. These papers were kept from the family for several years, and the Will was never heard of more.\*

2 Sir HENRY SPELMAN. He was born at Congham, in 1561, or 1562. Before he was fifteen he was sent to Trinity College, in Cambridge; but his father dying in about two years and half after, he was taken home by his mother to assist her in managing the affairs of the family. About a year after, he was sent to Lincoln's Inn to study the law, where having continued almost three years, he retired into the country, and married a Lady of good family and fortune. Beside his own rural and domestic concerns, which now demanded and employed the chief of his attention, he was also very assiduous to improve himself in the knowledge of the Constitution, Laws and Antiquities of his Country. He was early admitted a member of the Society of Anti-

\* A curious circumstance that attended Sir E. Coke's second marriage ought not to pass here unnoticed.—That marriage was solemnized in a private house, without banns or licence, in consequence of which the married couple and the officiating clergyman, together with Lord Burleigh, who was one of the company, were prosecuted in the archbishop's Court; but upon their submission, they escaped excommunication, and the consequent penalties, because, says the record, "they had offended not out of contumacy, but *through ignorance of the Law in that point.*"—So then the Lord Chief Justice of England, even Sir Edward Coke, transgressed the law *through ignorance!*

quaries, which brought him into an intimate acquaintance with Sir Robert Cotton, Camden, and others of the most eminent men for that kind of literature. In 1604, he was appointed High Sheriff of Norfolk, and about the same time wrote a description of that county, which he communicated to *Speed*: but it was not the first book he wrote: a book on Heraldry, and another on the Coins of the kingdom, he had before written; and perhaps more. In 1607, the king nominated him one of the Commissioners for determining the unsettled titles of lands and manors in Ireland; on which occasion he went thither several times, and discharged the trust reposed in him with great reputation. He was also appointed one of the Commissioners to enquire into the oppression of exacted fees in all courts and offices, as well ecclesiastical as civil; which gave rise to his treatise *De Sepultura*, or of the Burial Fees, in which he made it evident, that most part of the fees exacted by the clergy and church officers, on account of funerals, is no better than gross imposition. His close attention to those public employments proved prejudicial to his family and circumstances; in consideration of which the government made him a present of 300*l*, till something better could be done for him. His majesty also conferred on him the honour of knighthood, which, however, did probably impoverish rather than enrich him. His majesty did what was still worse, in prohibiting the Meetings of the Antiquarian Society, lest, forsooth, they might be led to treat of *state affairs*! \*

\* Which must have been about as reasonable as the old woman's advice to leave off thinking, for fear of thinking wrong.

His wise majesty seemed consious that those affairs were two brittle to be handled, and to foul to be exposed to open daylight. When about fifty he went to reside in London, and gave himself up to archaiological studies. He collected all such books and MSS. as he could find of that description, whether foreign or domestic. In 1626, he published the first part of his well known *Glossary*, which he never carried beyond the letter L, because, as some have suggested, he had said things under *Magna Charta*, and *Maximum Concilium*, that could not then have appeared without giving offence. He wrote many things, most of which are still held in considerable repute. He died in 1641: his posthumous works were published in 1698, in folio, under the inspection of bishop Gibson. At his death his papers came into the hands of his eldest Son,

3. Sir JOHN SPELMAN, "the heir of his studies," as he himself calls him, who was also a very learned man, and had great encouragement and assurance of favour from Charles I. That prince one time sent for Sir Henry Spelman, and offered him the mastership of Sutton Hospital, with some other advantages, in consideration of his good services both to church and state. He returned his majesty thanks, and told him that he was very old, and had now one foot in the grave, and should therefore be more obliged if he would consider his Son. Upon which the king sent for Mr. Spelman, and conferred both the mastership of the Hospital and the honour of knighthood upon him; and he afterwards employed him to draw up several papers in vindication



of the proceedings of the court. He published the Saxon Psalter under the title of *Psalterium Davidis Latino-Saxonicum vetus*, in 1640, in quarto, from a MS in his father's Library, collated with three other copies. He also wrote "The Life of King Alfred the Great," in English; which was translated into Latin, sometime after the Restoration, by Mr. Christopher Wase, superior Beadle of the Civil Law at Oxford; which translation, with notes and cuts by Mr. Obadiah Walker Master of University College, was published, from the Theatre Press, in 1679, in folio. The original English was also published from the same press, by Mr. Thomas Hearne, in 1709. 8vo. Sir John Spelman died in 1643.

4. Sir ROGER L'ESTRANGE is another of the notable natives of this part of the county. He was the youngest son of Sir Hamon L'Estrange, Bart. of Hunstanton Hall, where he was born Dec. 17, 1616. He received a liberal education, which he is supposed to have completed at Cambridge. His father being a zealous royalist, took care to instil the same principles in his son, which the latter eagerly embraced; and in 1639, he attended the king, in his expedition into Scotland. His attachment to the royal cause became now very strong; and sometime after nearly cost him his life: for in 1644, soon after the Earl of Manchester had reduced Lynn to the authority of the Parliament, young L'Estrange, thinking he had some interest in the place, as his father had been governor of it, formed a scheme for surprising it; and received a commission from the king, constituting him its governor, in

case of success: but his design being betrayed by two of his confederates, (named *Leman* and *Haggar*,) though both bound under an oath of secrecy, he was seized, tried, and, by a court-martial, condemned to die, as a traitor. While he lay in prison, he was visited by Mr. Arrowsmith, and Mr. Thorowgood, two of the assembly of divines, who very kindly offered him their utmost interest, if he would make some petitionary acknowledgement, and submit to take the covenant, but he refused. After thirty months spent in vain endeavours, either to have a hearing, or to be put into an exchangeable condition, he printed a state of his case, by way of appeal from the court martial (by which he had been tried) to the Parliament. About the time of the Kentish insurrection, in 1648, he escaped out of prison, with the keeper's privity, as he himself says, and went into Kent, and retiring to the house of Mr Hales, a young gentleman, heir to a great estate in that county, he spirited him up to head the insurrection; but that design failed of success. After this miscarriage, he escaped beyond sea, where he continued till the autumn of 1653; when taking his opportunity, in the change of government, upon Cromwell's dissolution of the long parliament, he returned into England, and having an opportunity to speak to Cromwell, and obtaining a favourable hearing, he escaped any further trouble, and shortly after received his discharge, by an order dated 31. Oct. 1653. How he spent his time for the next six or seven years does not appear; but it may be presumed that he remained pretty quiet, and avoided all interference with political, or state affairs. He is said

to have sometimes played before the Protector on the bass viol, for which he was by some called *Oliver's fidler*. After the Restoration he was little noticed, either by the king or his ministers, for sometime; which he very much resented. Afterward, however, he was appointed to a profitable, but odious office, that of *Licencer of the Press*; which he held till a little before the Revolution. In 1663 he set up a newspaper, called "The Public Intelligencer and the News," which was afterwards put down by the *London GAZETTE*; for which, however, government allowed him a consideration. After the popish plot, when the Tories began to gain the ascendant over the Whigs, he, in a paper called *the Observer*, became a zealous champion for the former, and an advocate for some of the worst measures of the Court. He was afterward knighted, and served in the parliament called by James II. in 1685. After the Revolution he met with some trouble, as a disaffected person. He is said to have been particularly disliked by the queen, who very curiously anagrammed his name, as was mentioned in the first section of this chapter. He died on the 11th. of September 1704, in the 88th. year of his age, and was interred in the church of St. Giles in the fields, where there is an inscription to his memory. He wrote many political tracts, in a high tory strain, and often with little regard to truth; and also published translations of Josephus's works, Cicero's offices, Seneca's morals, Erasmus's colloquies, Esop's fables, Quevedo's visions, &c. His style has been praised by some, while others have represented it as in-



tolerably low and nauseous: and Granger represents him as one of the great corrupters of our language. But there was something in his character that was still worse and more detestable than even his style.—Having mentioned him as one of our early compilers of newspapers, it may not be amiss here just to note, that he had been long preceded in that occupation, by a country-man of his, *Wm. Watts*, M. A. who is supposed to have been the very first compiler of a weekly, or stated English newspaper; at least his employer, *Butter*, seems to have been the first editor of such a paper, which was begun in August 1622, under the name of “The certain news of this present week;” and Watts is thought to have been the compiler of it from the first, and is therefore deemed the *Gallo-Belgicus* of England: alluding to the first newspaper, or periodical publication of the low Countries, about the beginning of the 17th century, which went by that name. But as Watts is said to have been a native of Lynn, a further account of him shall be given in its proper place.

5. *Sir ROBERT WALPOLE*, afterward Earl of Orford. He was born at Houghton, in 1674. In 1700, he was chosen member of Parliament for Lynn, which he also represented in many succeeding parliaments. In 1705 he was made one of the council to Prince George of Denmark, as lord high admiral. In 1707 he was made secretary at war; and in 1709 treasurer of the navy. On the change of the ministry, the year following, he was removed from all his places, and in 1711 was voted by the house of commons guilty of no-

torious corruption, in his office as secretary at war: it was therefore resolved that he should be committed to the tower, and expelled the house. But being considered by the whigs as a kind of martyr to their cause, the borough of Lynn rechose him, and though the house declared his election void, yet the electors persisted in their choice, and he sat in the next parliament. On the accession of George I. he was appointed pay-master-general of the forces, and a privy counsellor; but in a disagreement, two years after, with Mr. Secretary Stanhope, he resigned, turned patriot, of course, and opposed the ministry. Early in 1720 he was again made pay-master of the forces, and the complaisance of the courtier began once more to appear: nor was it long before he acquired full ministerial power, as first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer. The measures of his administration, during the long course of his premiership, have been often canyassed, with all the severity of critical inquiry, and variously determined. Though he has been called the father of corruption, and is said to have boasted, that he knew every man's price, yet the opposition prevailed over him in 1742, and obliged him to resign. He was screened from any further resentment of the house of commons, by a peerage, being created Earl of Orford, and gratified with a pension of 4000*l* a year. He is generally allowed to have been a minister of considerable talents, and a notable manager of parliaments. Whatever were his faults, and he doubtless had many, he was evidently a *man of peace*, and *no war minister*,



which ought to endear his memory to posterity. Had his successors, and particularly the late minister *Pitt*, been more of his disposition in that respect, it had probably, at this time, been a happy circumstance for the British empire, if not also for some other nations.

6. *Sir ANDREW FOUNTAINE*. He was born at *Narford*, and educated at Christ Church, Oxford, where he studied the Anglo-Saxon language, of his skill in which he afterward gave good proof, by a piece inserted in Dr Hicks's *Thesaurus*, entitled, "*Numismata Anglo-Saxonica, et Anglo-danica, breviter illustrata ab Andréâ Fountaine eq. aur. et æd. Christi Oxon alumno, 1705.*" King William conferred on him the honour of knighthood: and he was afterwards, it seems, in 1726, made knight of the Bath, by patent; at which time he was Vice Chamberlain to the princess of Wales. He travelled for a considerable time in various parts of Europe, and is said to have made a noble collection of antiques and curiosities; of his adventures in the meantime, not all over and above delicate or reputable, some curious anecdotes are still remembered. In 1709 he drew the designs for the *Tale of a Tub*, by Swift, with whom he is said to have been very intimate, as well as with Pope, who complimented him for the elegance of his taste. In 1727 he was appointed Warden of the Mint, which office he held till his death, in 1753. He was reputed an eminent connoisseur, virtuoso, and antiquary; and *Narford Hall* owes to him most, if not the whole of its boasted curiosities.



7. MARTIN FOLKES, Esq. much distinguished in his time as a philosopher and antiquary, was the eldest Son of a Barrister of the same name, by one of the two daughters and coheiresses of Sir Wm. Hovell of Hillington Hall; which accounts for the estate of the Hovells descending to him. He was born in 1690, at Westminster, where his father then resided. His education, which is supposed to have commenced at Westminster school, was finished at Cambridge, where his proficiency appears to have been very considerable. He became a member of the Royal Society in his 23rd year. About ten years after, he was appointed vice president of the same Society, to which he had been nominated by Sir Isaac Newton, the then President. He was also a member of the Society of Antiquaries. On the resignation of Sir Hans Sloane, in 1741, he was elected President of the R. S. and not long after he was nominated one of the eight foreign members of the Academy of Sciences at Paris. He died in 1754, and is said to have been a person of very extensive knowledge and great respectability; and in his private character polite, generous, and friendly. His principal service to science was his elucidation of the intricate subject of coins, weights, and measures. Though he had daughters of his own, he left the seat and estate of his maternal ancestors, the Hovells, to his brother, whose Son, Sir Martin Browne Folkes, bart. M. P. is their present possessor.

8. *The honourable* HORACE WALPOLE, afterward *Earl of Orford*. He was the youngest Son of the cc-

celebrated Sir Robert Walpole, and born about the year 1717. In 1739 he set out upon his travels, accompanied by his friend *Gray*, the poet: but they afterward quarrelled and separated. In the parliament of 1741 he was a member for Collington; in that of 1747, for Castle Rising; and in those of 1754 and 1761, for Lynn. At the expiration of the latter parliament he retired from business, and attached himself wholly to literary pursuits, residing chiefly, if not wholly, at Strawberry Hill, in Surrey, where he had a private printing-office, for the purpose of having his productions edited under his own eye. His principal works are "The Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors, and The Historic Doubts respecting the character, conduct, and person of Richard III. He wrote also *The Mysterious Mother*, *Castle of Otranto*, and other works, which are considered as proofs of his being a person of very extensive reading, and of eminent genius and talents. On the death of his nephew he succeeded to the family title and estates; but did not long enjoy them. He died in 1797,

9. *Admiral* HORATIO NELSON, afterward *Sir* HORATIO NELSON, and latterly, *Lord Viscount Nelson*, and *Duke of Bronte* in the kingdom of Naples. He was the 4th Son of the rev. Edward Nelson, rector of Burnham Thorpe, where he was born September 29, 1758. He is said to have been maternally related to the Walpoles and the Townshends, two of the first families in his native county. He was sent early to sea, under the care of a relation, who was a captain in the navy, where he soon distinguished himself, and became in

time one of the greatest naval commanders that this or any other country ever produced. His most renowned achievements were those at *Aboukir*, *Copenhagen*, and *Trafalgar*; the latter of which he did not survive, being killed by a musket ball, near the close of the engagement, which terminated in one of the most complete and decisive victories ever recorded in the annals of naval warfare. He arrived at high pre-eminence, through deeds of blood, and a vast destruction of his species, which can have no place among the christian virtues. But his biography and character are too well known to need being here further enlarged upon. \*

10. WILLIAM BEWLEY was for many years a most distinguished character among the inhabitants of this part of Norfolk. He was not a native of this country, but came hither, it is thought, from the north of England, about 1749, and settled at Great Massingham, as a surgeon and apothecary, where he continued for the remainder of his days, greatly respected as a professional man, but more especially so as a *philosopher*, in which character he was thought inferior to few, if any, of his cotemporaries. With some of the most enlightened of them he was held in high and deserved estimation. Dr. *Burney* and Dr. *Pricstley* were of that number; the latter of whom he very materially assisted in his experimental pursuits, and was the first who discovered and suggested to him the acidity of mephitic or fixed air. Intimate as these two philosophers appear to have been, they were in some respects,

\* For the sympathies of his nature and qualities of his heart, see his Letter to Simon Taylor, in *Flower's Pol. Rev.* Mar. 1807, p. xxxvi.



it seems, of very different sentiments. Priestley was an admirer of *Hartley*, and a decided materialist, while Bewley, on the other hand, was a disciple of *Berkeley*, and a firm believer of the ideal system. Between these two systems there is evidently a very striking contrast; yet that occasioned no breach in their friendship, or any coolness or abatement in their esteem for each other. Among theologians, and minor philosophers, much slighter differences might have occasioned (as they generally do) endless jarrings, and an irreconcilable antipathy; but Priestley and Bewley were men of another, and a very different cast, and knew how to entertain the purest friendship for each other, while they held, on some important points, very dissimilar, and even opposite opinions. Their friendship commenced about the time that Priestley published his *History of Electricity*. Bewley's critique upon that work, in the *Monthly Review*, was the means, as the Dr. says, of opening a correspondence between them, which was the source of much satisfaction to him, as long as Mr. Bewley lived. The Dr. used instantly to communicate to him an account of every new experiment that he made, and in return was favoured with his remarks upon them. All that Bewley published of his own (except those articles which he furnished for the *Monthly Review*) were papers inserted in the Dr's. volumes on *Air*, all of which, says the doctor, are ingenious and valuable. Always publishing in that manner, he used to call himself *Dr. Priestley's Satellite*. There was a vein of pleasant wit and humour (as the Dr. informs us) in all his correspondence, which added greatly to

the value of it. His Letters to the Dr. would have made several volumes, and the Dr's to him, still more. He was in his latter years a valetudinarian of a very sickly appearance. When he found himself dangerously ill, and his dissolution fast approaching, he made a point of paying the Dr. a visit before he died. He accordingly made a journey from Massingham to Birmingham, for that purpose, accompanied by Mrs. Bewley: and after spending about a week there, he went to pay another last or parting visit to his friend Dr. Burney, and there, at his house in St. Martin's Street, London, he died, on the 5th. of Sept. 1783. He was for many years one of the writers of the Monthly Review, and the articles he furnished for that respectable publication were thought not inferior to the productions of the very ablest of his associates. How many articles he furnished for that work is not known, except, perhaps, to the Editor. The review of *PRIESTLEY'S History of Electricity*, (as was before observed,) of *WHITEHURST'S Inquiry into the original State and formation of the Earth*, and of *Sir JOHN HAWKINS' History of Music*, are understood to have been drawn up by Mr. Bewley. The last mentioned article is said to have been much admired at the time by the late celebrated Dr. Samuel Johnson. Mr. Bewley was sometimes denominated *The Philosopher of Massingham*, and with as much propriety, it was supposed, as *Hobbes* was styled *The Philosopher of Malmsbury*. The branches of knowledge in which he was said chiefly to excel were those of *Anatomy, Electricity, and Chemis-*

*try*. He had naturally a fine ear, and was particularly fond of music; and was not only an excellent judge of compositions, but also a good performer on the violin. He cultivated the art and science of music as a relief from severer pursuits, and applied to it in the hours of relaxation, with that ardour which characterized all his undertakings. A love for every liberal science and an insatiable curiosity after whatever was connected with them, were his predominant passions. So strongly and lastingly did they operate, that he desired some books might be brought to him on the very evening before he died, when the excruciating pains of his disorder had a little abated; and though unable to read himself, he listened to what was read, and drank in knowledge with his wonted eagerness, and,

———“ with his latest breath  
Thus shewed his ruling passion strong in death.”

He was a remarkably warm friend, and an excellent husband: and withal of so benevolent and peculiar a turn of mind, that he would not willingly hurt a worm; nor would he, it seems, cut a living twig from a shrub or tree, because he did not know, (as he would say) but the operation might occasion pain. Many will probably affect to smile at this, under an idea of their own fancied superiority, whose characters, nevertheless, would bear no comparison with that of William Brewley, not to say as *scholars*, and *philosophers*, but even as *men*, and *members of society*. In short, he appears to have been a very good, as well as a very wise and great man. †

† See the Memoirs of Dr. Priestly, Vol. 1. and also the London Magazine, for November, 1783.



SECTION V. *Of the ANIMALS, and particularly the BIRDS of this country.*

*Sir Thomas Browne* seems to have placed the SPERMACEI-WHALE among the animals of Norfolk. One of them sixty two feet in length, was taken, as he says, near Wells. Another of the same kind, (he adds) about twenty years after, was caught at Hunstanton; and not far from thence, eight or nine were driven ashore, two of which were said to have young ones, after they had forsaken the water.

The PORPESSE, the DOLPHIN, and the GRAMPUS, are also, by the same writer, numbered among the Norfolk animals. The flesh of the two former, he represents as good food, especially that of the Dolphin, which when well-cooked, he says, is generally allowed to be a good dish. But it is very rarely that one meets with any that have tasted of it.

As to the COMMON SEAL or *Sea-Calf*, being an amphibious creature, it is not so unnaturally classed among land animals. Numbers of them are often found sleeping on the shore and the sand-banks, below Lynn; while one, as is said, is keeping watch in the meantime, lest his companions be caught napping, and to apprise them of the approach of danger; in which case, they all instantly rush into the deep and disappear.

OTTERS also are not uncommon in this country. The young ones, says Sir T Browne, are sometimes preyed upon by buzzards, having occasionally been found in

the nests of these birds. By many persons they are accounted no bad dish, as he says; and he adds, that Otters may be rendered perfectly tame, and in some houses have been known to serve the office of turnspits.

To the foregoing animals may be added *Badgers*, *Hares*, and *Rabbits*. The latter are here more numerous than in most other parts of the kingdom, and yet not so numerous it seems as they have been, owing to modern agricultural improvements. Hares are also in general pretty plentiful here in most places, and the game-laws very strictly enforced, as many a poacher knows to his cost.

The different Species of BIRDS found in this country, including the *water-fowl*, are very numerous. The following List includes the chief of them, and is taken mostly from Sir Thomas Browne's Paper inserted in the 20th volume of the Monthly Magazine. 1. The *Sea* or *Fen* EAGLE. Some of this species are said to be so large as to measure three yards and a quarter in the extent of their wings, and are capable of being perfectly tamed, and will feed on fish, red herrings, flesh, or any kind of offal. 2. The OSPREY, which hovers about the fens, and will dip his claws into the water, and often take up a fish, and likewise catch *Coots*. It is sometime called the *bald-buzzard*. 3. The KITE. This species is said not to be very numerous. 4 The MERLIN, or *Hobby-bird*: said to be subject to the vertigo, and sometimes caught in those fits. 5. The WOODCHAT, or *bird-catcher*; a small bird of prey about the size of a thrush. 6. The RAVEN. 7. The

ROOK. 8. The JACKDAW. 9. The ROLLER: a very uncommon bird. 10. The CUCKOO. 11, 12, 13, 14. The GREEN WOODPECKER; The GREATER SPOTTED WOODPECKER; The MIDDLE SPOTTED WOODPECKER; and the NUTHATCH. 15. The KINGFISHER. 16. The HOOPOE, or *Hoope-bird*, so called from its note. 17, 18, 19. The SKYLARK, WOODLARK, and TIT-LARK. These are very common; but another, called *the great crested lark*, it seems, is not so. 20. The STARES, or STARLINGS, are in vast, and almost incredible numbers about the fens, where they roost at night, about the autumn on the reeds and alders, from whence they take their flight in the morning like thick clouds. The rooks, though very numerous in some parts of the kingdom, are never any where seen in such flocks as these birds are about the fens. 21. The HAW-FINCH. This bird is chiefly seen in summer, about cherry time; and is said to feed on the kernels of cherries and some other kinds of stone fruit; and by means of its amazingly strong bill it breaks the stone without much difficulty. 22. The WAXEN CHATTERER; which is said to be a very beautiful bird, but now a more uncommon bird than formerly. 23. The CROSS-BILL; is migratory, and arrives about the beginning of Summer. 24. The GOLD-FINCH, otherwise *Fools-coat* or *Draw-water*. 25. The WHEATEAR. These breed in rabbit burrows, and warrens are full of them from April to September. They are caught with a hobby and a net, and are accounted excellent eating. 26. The GOAT-SUCKER, or *Dorhawk*, so called from the circumstance of its feeding on dors, or beetles. It breeds



here and lays a very handsome spotted egg. [It flies about later than most other birds except the owl; and while perching in the evening on a tree, it makes a noise somewhat like the croaking of frogs, or rather the twirling of a spinning wheel, from which it has in some parts been called, *The Spinner*.] 27. The BUSTARD. A writer whose signature is X. P. S. in the 20th volume of the Monthly Magazine, says that “the bustards are at this time all extirpated out of Norfolk;” but he is certainly mistaken: they are still to be found in the open parts of the country, but not so frequently as formerly. They become more and more rare; and they will, perhaps, be soon extirpated; but it is not the case yet. The bustard is the largest of British birds, and is remarkable (says Sir Thomas Browne) for the strength of its breast-bone, and for its short heel. It lays two eggs which are much bigger than those of a turkey, as the bustard itself is also larger, as well as handsomer than that bird. It is accounted a dainty dish, and those who have eaten it, speak much in its praise. This famous bird seems incapable of being tamed or domesticated. \*

28. and 29. BLACK and RED GAME, now unknown here. Some of the latter, or grouse, were found, it seems, about Lynn, in Sir Thomas Browne’s time. 30. 31. PARTRIDGE and QUAIL are here in great numbers. 32. The CORNCRAKE, or RAYLE is also commonly found here. 33. The SPOONBILL, now but seldom

\* The late Mr. Carr, a merchant of Lynn, used to say, that his father once killed six Bustards at one shot.—They were probably much more numerous then, than they are now.—A respectable gentleman of Lynn, however, assures this writer that not many years ago, he saw no less than eight or ten of them together, in the neighbourhood of Stanhoe.

found here, though formerly, it seems, pretty common.

34. The CRANE, was formerly common here, but now scarcely deemed a british bird. 35. The WHITE STORK, now rarely seen, though formerly not so uncommon a bird. 36. The HERON still abounds here. 37. The BITTERN, or *Bitour*, is also very common: both this and the preceding are deemed good dishes. 38. The GODWIT or *Yarwhelp*, is very common in Marshland, and deemed a dainty dish. It frequents the sea shore and salt marshes in winter, and the fens and interior parts in summer. 39. 40. The REDSHANK, and CURLEW, are not unfrequent in the marshes and about the sea coast. 41. The GNAT or KNOT. This is a small bird, but is at times very fat, and in much request for the table. They are caught with nets. 42. The LAPWING is common here on all the heaths, and in other parts. 43. The RUFF: so called from the feathers of the neck projecting like a ruff. This is a marsh bird, and varies greatly in its colours; no two of them are found alike. The female is smaller than the male, has no ruff about the neck, and is called a *Reeve*. It is very seldom seen. The males when put together will fight most bloodily and destroy each other. They lose their ruffs towards the end of autumn, or beginning of winter. They are very handsome birds. 44. The DOTTEREL, is a bird of passage; comes in September and March, and is accounted excellent eating. 45. KING DOTTEREL, or *Fen Dotterel*: somewhat less, but better coloured than the former. 46. The STONE CURLEW, is a tall handsome bird, remarkably eyed. It is said to be so common in this country, as to have

the name of the Norfolk plover. 47. *The Avoset*, or *scooping horn*, is a tall, black and white bird, with a bill semicircularly bent upwards. It is a summer bird, and not unfrequent in Marshland. 48. *The OYSTER CATCHER* or *Sea-pie*. 49. *The Common Coote*. These birds are frequently observed in great flocks on broad waters. said to be remarkable for their dexterous defence of themselves and young, against kites and buzzards. 50. 51. *The Moor*, or *WATER-HEN*. and *WATER-RAILE*. 52. *The WILD SWAN*, or *ELKE*. It is probable they come from great distances, for all the northern travellers are said to have observed them in the remotest parts. Like other northern birds, if the winter be mild they usually come no further south, than Scotland, if very hard they proceed onward till they arrive in a country sufficiently warm. 53. 54. 55. *BARNACLE-GOOSE*, *BRENT-GOOSE*, and *SHIELDRAKE*. The two former are common; and the latter pretty much so, especially about Norrold, where they are said to breed in rabbit-burrows. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. *The SHOVELER*, *PINTAIL*, or *Sea-pheasant*, *GARGANEY*, or *Teal*, *WILD-GOOSE*, and *GOSANDER*, or *Mirganser*, are all found in this country. 61. *The DUN-DIVER*, or *Saw billed diver*. It is bigger than a duck; and distinguished from other divers by a remarkable sawed bill to retain its slippery prey, which consists principally of eels. 62. *The SNEW*, as well as the *WIDGEONS*, and other species of wild ducks, are very common. \* 63. *The PUFFIN*, has a remarkable

\* The fen-fowlers, with their long guns, make terrible havock among them, killing sometimes between 20 and 30 at one shot; and of *Coots*



bill, which differs from that of a duck in being formed not horizontally but vertically, for the purpose of feeding in clefts of rocks, on shellfish, &c. 64. The SHEAR-WATER, somewhat billed like a cormorant, but much smaller, is a strong and fierce bird, that hovers about ships when the sailors cleanse their fish, &c. They will live some weeks without food. 65. The GANNET, is a large, white, strong billed bird: Sir Thomas Browne saw one of them in Marshland, which fought, and would not be forced to take wing. Another he saw taken alive, and for sometime kept and fed with herrings. 66. 67. The SHAG and CORMORANT, are generally confounded by the country people. The former builds upon trees, and the latter only in the rocks. 68. The NORTHERN-DIVER. 69. The GREAT CRESTED GREBE, appear about April, and breed on the broad waters. Their nest is formed of weed &c. and float on the water, so that their eggs are seldom dry while they are set on. 70. The LITTLE GREBE, *small diver* or *Dab-chick*, is found in the rivers and broad waters here. 71. The SKUA GULL, is sometimes found here in very hard winters. 72. The HERRING GULL, is found here, but more commonly about Yarmouth. 73. The BLACK-HEADED GULL, is here very plentiful. The eggs are used by the country people in puddings, and otherwise. The birds are sometimes brought to the markets in great

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twice that number; which however, is nothing like the number of *Starlings* which they have sometimes slaughtered:—a person of veracity, who has lived long in the fens, assures this writer, that he knew an instance, near Coningsby, in Lincolnshire, of 36 dozens of *Starlings* being killed at a single shot, by one *Thomas Hall*.

number, and even sent to London. 74. The GREATER FERN, or *Sea Swallow*, is a neat white and fork-tailed bird, but much larger than a swallow. 75. The MAY CHITT, is a small dark-grey bird. It comes in great plenty into Marshland in May, and stays about a month, seldom beyond six weeks. It is fatter than most birds of its size, and accounted excellent eating. 76. The CHURRE, another small bird, is frequently taken among the preceding. 77. The WHINNE BIRD, is marked with five yellow spots, and is less than a wren. 78. The CHIPPER. This somewhat resembles the former; comes here in the spring, and feeds on the first buddings of birches and other early trees.—To all these may be added, 79. The NIGHTINGALE, which is here a constant visiter. 80. 81. 82 The SWALLOW, MARTIN, and SWIFT. Also a variety of FINCHES, and likewise of DIVING-FOWL, *mustela fusca*, and *mustela variegata*, so called from the resemblance they have to the head of a weasel.”—Stockdoves, or wild pigeons, are here found in great numbers; and so are Pheasants, Snipes, and Woodcocks.\* The Magpie likewise and the Owl are found among the birds of this country.—Not to mention the Blackbird, the Thrush, the Yellow-hammer, the Wagtail, the Titmouse, the Sparrow, the Wren, the Redbreast, and others that are common to most parts of this kingdom.

Many rare plants are said to be found in some parts of this country; but as no good botanist is known to re-

\* Just after their arrival in October, the Woodcocks are said to be sometimes exceedingly abundant here.

side here, or to have drawn up a catalogue of them, they cannot be now enumerated. The neighbourhood of *East Winch* is thought to be one very good spot for botanizing.

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SECTION VI. *Brief account, of places before omitted, in the vicinity of Lynn, on this eastern side of the Ouse—Sechey—Runcton—Downham—Denver—Helgay—Southery—Feltwell—Methwold—Stoke, &c. Feltwell New-Fen-District—Fincham—Swaffham—Babingley—Sharnborne—Great Malthouse—Hunston light-house, &c.*

Before we conclude this chapter, and this first part of the work, it may not be improper, or unacceptable to the reader, to take some notice of a few of the most remarkable places on this side, that have been omitted in the preceding pages. We shall begin with.

SECHEY, \* commonly called *Sech*, a small market town, which lies about three miles from Lynn, to the south, on the Downham and London road. Anciently it belonged to the Lords Bardolf, as a part of their manor of north Runcton. In 33. Hen. III. the then Lord Bardolf had a charter of free warren here, with a weekly

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\* So called, probably, from the river on whose banks it stands, and which, it seems, was formerly called *Ey*: so that Sechey may signify, Sech on the Ey, or on the banks of the river so called.—See *Parkin*.



market on Mondays, and two fairs annually. Afterwards it passed, with the rest of the said manor, to the Earl of Warwick, who in the reign of James I. had a grant of a market here every fortnight, on Tuesdays, for fat cattle. It seems rather doubtful, if these markets were originally kept every other Tuesday *throughout the year*: at least it is said not to have been the case for many years past, but only for some of the latter months of the year. They begin at the dawn of day, and are generally over pretty early in the morning. They are also said to be well attended by butchers and graziers from different parts of the country, and sometimes from a considerable distance, even as far as Norwich, or further, and also from Lincolnshire.—The river is navigable, for lighters, a considerable way up into the country beyond this place. Sechey is in the parish of *North Runcton*; some miles from which, in a southerly direction lies the church of *South Runcton*, now in a dilapidated state. This ruin presents a semicircular east end of what has been thought an *ancient Saxon* church, and is believed to be the remains of one given to St. Edmund, in the reign of Canute.—Of the reasonableness and tenability of this belief, some doubts, perhaps, may be justly entertained. The said ruin has certainly the appearance of considerable antiquity, but that appearance, together with its uncommon and semicircular form, will not be quite sufficient to satisfy every one, that it is altogether as old as the days of Canute, or that it has actually stood the brunt and braved the blasts of near a thousand winters.—A few miles further on, in the same direction, is

DOWNHAM, or *Market Downham*, as it is sometimes called. \* It is pleasantly situated on the side of a hill, and upon the Ouse, over which it has a good bridge. It had heretofore two weekly markets, Mondays and Saturdays, but that is no longer the case; the latter only are now to be considered as its proper market days, on which the town is said to be well supplied with fish and wild fowl, from the adjacent fens. Downham was formerly celebrated for its great butter market, which used to be kept near the bridge, every *Monday*, and which it seems, has before now supplied London with the immense quantity of ninety thousand firkins in a year. From its being sent by way of Cambridge, it obtained the name of Cambridge butter. These markets have been discontinued, and the butter is now taken for sale to Swaffham. It is said that the privilege of a market was granted to Downham by Edward the confessor, and that its principal manor, with the whole hundred, were given by king Edgar to Ramsey Abbey, whose abbot, as we are further informed, was authorized by King John to hold a fair here. By Henry III. he was invested with the additional authority to try and execute malefactors at his “gallows of Downham.”—Some monastic buildings, and particularly a *priory* of Benedictine monks, stood formerly near the church.—There is in this town a small dissenting congregation, the chapel belonging to which, was erected in the early part of the last century. In 1801 the town and whole parish of Downham contained 278 houses, and 1512 inhabitants.

\* Anciently it was called *Downham-hithe*, i. e. Downham-port. Gibson's Camden.

Further on, in a low situation, is *DENVER*, a large village, noted as the birth place of *Dr. Robert Brady*, the English historian. The church is a mean structure, built of *Car*, or *rag*-stone, *camerated* with wooden pan-nells, and covered with *reed*, or *thatch*. Near to this place is *Denver Sluice*, termed the grand *erratum* in our fen improvements.—Not far from Denver and Downham lies the village of *Helgay*, said by some authors † to be regularly infested, every six or seven years, by an incredible number of field mice, which, like locusts, would infallibly devour all the corn of every kind, but for the friendly, seasonable, and effectual interposition of a prodigious flight of owls from Norway, which never fail to arrive that year, and stay till they have totally destroyed those mischievous vermin: after which they quietly depart, re-cross the seas, and return to their native forests, attended by the veneration and benediction of all the good people of *Helgay*, who had derived from them, the most essential benefit, without the least mixture of detriment; as they had, during their whole stay, meddled with no one thing in the place, but the mice.—Such is the substance and purport of this curious story, whose questionable and improbable appearance might be supposed more than sufficient to prevent its being ever passed upon the public as a matter of fact. That, however, has not been the case: it has been therefore introduced here for the purpose of exhibiting it in its true light, as a lying tale, that those credulous

† See *Norfolk Tour*, last Edition, p. 365, Also *Description of England and Wales*, volume 6, p. 251.



people who have been imposed upon, and misled by others, may be undeceived.

Beyond Helgay are the villages of *Southery*, *Feltwell*, *Methwold*, *Northwold*, *Stoke-ferry*, *Werham*, *West Dereham*, &c. some of them of pretty large size and population. *West Dereham Abbey* was formerly a place of no small note, and founded as early as 1188. At the dissolution it went into private hands, and about the close of the 17th. century it was the seat of Sir Thomas Dereham, a diplomatic character. More recently it has successively been the seat of Sir Simeon Stuart, and Lord Montrath. *Werham* in former times was possessed by the *Clares*, who then ranked high among the English barons; and it was the head lordship of what was, and still is called the *honor of Clare*, of which several neighbouring manors were held. Those great lords had here a *prison*, and of course a *gallows* also; which indicate the great sway they once bore in these parts.—These places lie in and about a remarkable drainage tract, called *the Feltwell new fen district*, which, like the river Nene, has proved a very unfortunate concern to many of those whose property had been unhappily entrusted in the hands of its commissioners. Suspicions of some disreputable doings are said to have been entertained respecting both the above concerns, which will probably deter many from affording any pecuniary aid to the projected Eau-brink Cut, lest it should turn out, or be managed as badly;—if indeed the present formidable opposition to it should finally fail to effect its entire relinquishment: an event which many

seem to consider as not at all improbable.—Northerly from these parts is the village and parish of *Fincham*. In that parish church is a square font, supposed to have belonged to the old church, which is mentioned in Domesday-book:— Further on, in the same direction, and the most considerable place that way, is

SWAFFHAM. This respectable town stands on high ground, upon a dry gravelly soil, and in a situation that seems greatly favourable to health and longevity. Its streets are wide and airy, and the buildings distributed over a considerable space of ground. The houses are generally neat, and many of them large and handsome, inhabited by wealthy and genteel families. The market-hill is pleasant and spacious, on which was erected in 1783 an elegant cross, by the Lord Orford of that time. The market is on Saturday, and plentifully supplied with good provisions. The great butter-market, formerly kept at Downham, is now kept here. The town stands so high, that some of the wells are said to be fifty yards deep. A handsome assembly-room has been erected on the west side of the market-hill, in which subscription assemblies are held every month. But the chief public structure of the town is the *Church*, a large and fine edifice, built at different times, in the reigns of Henry VI. Edward IV. and Henry VII. It is in the form of a cathedral, and consists of a nave and two ailes, with two transepts on the south side, one to the north, and a lofty well proportioned tower, which is surmounted with enriched embrasures, and purfled pinnacles. The nave is very lofty, having twenty-six cleristery win-

dows, and its inner roof ornamented with carved wood, figures of angels, bosses, &c. The north aile and steeple, are said to have been built by one *John Chapman*, stated, but erroneously it seems, to have been a *traveling tinker*; and who is also reported to have been Church-warden in 1460. —In 1800 the houses of Swaffham amounted to 452, and the population to 2220. Formerly there was here a rector and a vicar; the latter presented by the former; so that the rectory was a *Sinecure*, and probably a very rich one. The patronage of the vicarage is in the bishop of Norwich. —Near this town is an extensive heath, which forms a convenient race-ground. The races here are held about michaelmas. Coursing matches are also frequent here, and the *greyhounds* are as regularly entered for the purpose, and placed under the same restrictions as *running-horses*. \*

Further on, between Swaffham and the sea-coast, there are not many places that seem to demand very particular notice. *Babingley* and *Sharnborne*, which both lie that way, are traditionally reported to contain the sites of the two first christian places of worship among the East-Anglians, and supposed to have been erected in the seventh century. In the same way lies *Snettisham*, a large village, said to have been formerly a town, with a weekly market on Fridays. Here also have been dug up several of those instruments, in the shape of hatchet-heads, with handles to them, usually denominated celts, † which, if taken to be British, as is most generally

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\* For a further account of Swaffham, see *Norfolk Tour*: also *Beauties of England*, volume, xi. † *Beauties of England* as before.



thought, or even Roman, as has been judged by others, must denote that Snettisham is a place of no inconsiderable antiquity. *Brancaster* has been already noticed, as once a famous Roman station; and it may be here added, that it has of late years attracted no small attention on account of its *great malt house*, built with a view to the export trade, and supposed to be the largest edifice of that kind in the kingdom; being 312 feet in length, by 31 in breadth, and furnished with all the necessary offices and conveniences for conducting the malting process on a large scale: 420 quarters of barley, are said to have been there wetted weekly, during the malting season.

To the west of Brancaster and the said great malt-house, and not far off, is the village of *Hunstanton*, or *Hunston*, as it is most commonly called: near to which, on a cliff, overlooking Lynn Roads and the entrance into Lynn Haven, and elevated ninety feet above high-water mark, stands the *Hunston Light-house*, which is upon a different construction from other English light-houses, and supposed superior to any of them. It is lighted by lamps and reflectors, instead of coals, on a much improved and very judicious plan, the merit of which is due to MR, WALKER of *Lynn*, by whom it was invented, and under whose direction it was here executed in 1778.—This light is communicated by 18 concave reflectors, each of eighteen inches diameter. They are fixed upon two shelves, one placed over the other in such a manner that the strongest light may be seen where it is most wanted. In the N by E direc-

tion a strong light is necessary for ships to avoid the dangerous sands and shoals on the Lincolnshire coast; here therefore are placed seven reflectors in the space of two points of the compass, which will appear at some distance as one light. In other directions a weaker light is sufficient. A single reflector, with a lamp of ten single threads of cotton placed in the focus of the curve, which is a parabola, will appear, at 15 miles distance, larger than a star of the first magnitude:—that is, if the glass be kept clean, and the lamp trimmed; otherwise, instead of light, there will no doubt be found obscurity, for which no blame can attach to the projector. \*

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\* Ten single threads of cotton to each of those 18 lamps, make in all 180: now a street lamp in London, is said to contain 28 single threads, and if we divide 180 by 28, we shall have  $6\frac{3}{7}$ ; hence the oil consumed in the Hunston Light-house, is less than that consumed by 7 London street lamps.—The advantages derived from Mr. Walker's plan, are, 1. The strength of light may be proportioned to the distance at which it may be necessary to be seen. 2. It may be maintained at a less expence than where the light is equally diffused all round the compass. 3. It requires little attendance. 4. It always appears of the same magnitude—provided, as was above hinted, the glass be kept clean, and the lamps in a proper trim—circumstances that must be attended to, and not neglected.—Here it may be further observed that the improvement of light-houses is not the only subject that has undergone Mr. W.'s close and successful investigation. Many papers written by him, have appeared in Nicholson's Philosophical Journal, and Tilloch's Philosophical Magazine, giving an account of divers useful inventions of his, and new discoveries in physics, chiefly under the following heads.—1. On a method of using candles, so as to produce no smoke, nor require snuffing.—2. A method of obviating the effects of thick wires in transit telescopes. 3. On the Plumb line and Spirit level. 4. On the vibrations of pendulums in vacuo. 5. On a standard of light, by which we may compare the strength of any other light. 6. Description of an apparatus for conducting sound, and holding conversations at a distance. 7. Description of a new reflecting quadrant. 8. On the best method of ascertaining the dip of the horizon at sea. 9. On the methods of observing the longitude at sea. 10. On



This house remained for many years the only one of the kind in the united kingdom; but about the year 1787, several others, on the same plan, were erected on the coast of Scotland, as appears by the following extracts from one of the provincial papers of that time. —“NORTHERN LIGHT-HOUSES. An Act of Parliament was obtained a few years ago, by some gentlemen in Edinburgh, empowering them to erect four Light-houses on the Northern parts of Great Britain, In consequence of which the Trustees made diligent enquiry into the several modes of erecting lights for the use of mariners, at sea. These enquiries were made not only in this kingdom, but in foreign parts, that their intended erection might be made on the best principles. In September, 1786, the then Lord Provost of Edinburgh applied to Mr. Ezekiel Walker of Lynn in Norfolk, for his opinion in the construction of them. Mr. Walker's answer to his lordship's enquiry, and the plan projected in it, gave such general satisfaction to the Trustees, that they unanimously resolved on constructing and lighting them on his principle; and in the spring of 1787, the work was begun accordingly. The first of these lights stands on *Kinnard's Head*, [in the county of Aberdeen;] the second on *north Ranald-*

the phenomenon of the horizontal moon. 11. Description of a new cometarium. 12. On transit instruments. 13. On vision. 14. Description of a new optical instrument called a Phantasmascope. 15. Observations on vision, when objects are seen through a mist. 16. On the power of the eye, by which it is adjusted to see objects distinctly at different distances. 17. On the apparent magnitudes of the same object seen under different circumstances. 18. On deal pendulum rods. 19. On the human eye: in which many errors of former writers on vision are pointed out, and the true theory explained.



*shaw*, the northernmost of the Orkney Islands; the third on the *point of Scalpa* in the *isle* of *Herris*; and the fourth on the *Mull of Kyntire*, which may be seen in Ireland." ‡ *Cumberland Packet* of Sept. 10. 1788.—In the same paper, of Dec. 9. 1789, appeared the following passage—"Light-houses. The excellent method of erecting light-houses prescribed by Mr. E. Walker is now sufficiently proved. That it produces a *strong light* is well known, but that this desirable object is attained at a small expence of *oil*, can only come under the inspection of a few; however one argument, even in favour of this is now made public. The Commissioners for erecting four light-houses on the northern parts of Great Britain obtained another Act the last session of Parliament, authorizing them to erect a *fifth*: "For the light-house on the south west point of the Mull of Kyntire is found to be of the greatest importance to the navigation of ships passing to and from the *north* channel; but not to ships passing to and from the Firth of Clyde through the *south* channel. It is for the security of ships navigating this *south* channel that the commissioners purpose erecting another light-house on the island of *ARRAN*, or upon the little island of *PLADA*, near the same; which is to be done *without any increase of the duties* authorised to be levied by the former act."—This act also authorizes the commissioners to erect other light-houses on the coast of Scotland, whenever the produce of the present duties on the tonage of

‡ It was not till after the erection of these, that the Corporation of the Trinity House had some Light-houses constructed on similar principles, which are now in use, and well approved.

ships will enable them so to do.—This at once justifies the decided opinion of the commissioners in favour of Mr. Walker's projection, and pronounces the most unequivocal encomium on his abilities."

Being now about to close our remarks on the country about Lynn, it may be here noted, in regard to Marshland and the fenny parts in general, that so little care appears to have been taken there to counteract, or guard against the natural insalubrity of the country, and promote the health of the inhabitants, that not a few of the older dwelling-houses, and particularly those of the cottagers, and lower classes, have their floors actually underground, or below the surface of the land on the outside. This can be said to furnish but a very indifferent sample or specimen of the boasted wisdom of our ancestors. Those of the present generation, however, cannot with much good grace blame them on this occasion, while they are themselves at the expence and pains of keeping up and repairing those same unhealthful dwellings. Our new houses indeed are generally, if not always constructed upon a much better plan; and that may be said to be one of the few things in which we appear to exceed our forefathers. In other things we certainly fall short of them, and act our parts much worse than they would have done—even so much worse, that they would unquestionably have blushed for, and despised us, and that very justly, had they foreseen some of our recent proceedings.

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*End of Part I.*

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# HISTORY OF LYNN.

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## PART II.

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OF THE ORIGIN AND ANTIQUITY OF LYNN, WITH  
A SKETCH OF ITS HISTORY FROM ITS FIRST RISE  
TO THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

CHAP. I. Of Lynn while Britain formed a part of the Roman Empire

SECTION I. *The present town, or borough of Lynn, of no great antiquity—its site not the same with that of the original town—the probable site of the latter, and era of its origin.*

What is now called *Lynn*, *Lynn Regis*, or the *Borough of King's Lynn*, is generally considered as a place of no very high antiquity. It arose probably during the Heptarchy, out of the ruins of the old town, though not built on the same spot, and must soon have become a place of no small consideration in the kingdom of the East Angles, as may very reasonably be concluded, from the convenience of its situation for trade and commerce. We hear not much of it, however till after the conquest, when it presently appears as a place of growing importance, under the direction and manage-



ment of its new French masters, the enterprising companions and agents of the successful Norman adventurer, the Bonaparte of the eleventh century.

But though no traces can be discovered of the existence of a town on the *eastern* side of the river, prior to the time of the heptarchy, it is more than probable, that there was a town on the opposite, or *western* side, long anterior to that period. That town has not yet entirely disappeared. It may still be recognized in the little village called *Old Lynn*; a name which plainly indicates, that the original town must have stood there. It is well known that the town on the eastern side was formerly called *New Lynn*, or rather *New LEN*, and that the other was then distinguished from it by the name of *Old Len*. No good reason can be assigned for this, but that the latter was the original town, known by the name of *Len* long before the other had any existence. The attempt made by Spelman, Parkin, and others to elude this conclusion is weak and frivolous. It does not appear that there ever has been any period, since the eastern, or modern town existed, when the inhabitants did not apply the name of *Old Len*, or *Old Lynn* to the other. There can therefore be no manner of doubt, but that it is to this same old Lynn we are to look for the site of the ancient and original town. It is probable, indeed, that that town might extend much nigher to the spot now occupied by the present town, than what the village of Old Lynn now does, as the bed of the river was formerly very narrow, compared with what it is at present; and the waters are allowed to have made

considerable encroachments on the western shore. When, and by whom the original town was founded, as well as, what may be the true etymology, or real meaning of its name, are points that are involved in no small obscurity, and cannot, therefore, be very easily and clearly settled, or ascertained. It seems, however, highly probable, if not certain, as shall be shewn by and by, that it took its name from its marshy situation, and was founded by the Romans, at the time when they undertook to drain the fen-country, and rescue Marshland, by strong embankments, from the power and ravages of the ocean. It may also pretty safely be concluded, that this must have taken place within the first century of the christian era, and probably in the reign of Nero, if not in that of Claudius. \* The foundation of Lynn may therefore be considered as cœval with the first introduction of christianity into this island; which was nearly if not quite 1750 years ago: and though this fixes the origin of Lynn at a pretty remote period, and much beyond what has hitherto been supposed, yet it seems to be supported by no small degree of probability.

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\* *Caius Decianus*, as was observed before, was the Roman Procurator over the province of the *Iceni* in the reign of Claudius, and perhaps in that of Nero; and seems to have been, not only the chief cause of Boadicea's revolt, by his brutal treatment of her and her daughters, but also the principal director of the canals, embankments and other works and improvements then carried on in and about the fens.— See above, Part I. Chap. 2. Section 1.

SECTION II. *A short digression relating to the first Introduction of Christianity into Britain—Bardism.*

Having, at the close of the preceding section, suggested an opinion that the origin of Lynn was cœval with the first Introduction of Christianity into this country, it will not, it is presumed, be any way improper, or unacceptable to the reader to offer here a few observations toward ascertaining the time when the last mentioned event took place, especially as all our English writers and antiquaries have left the matter very much in the dark.

*Gildas*, a writer of the sixth century, and the most ancient of all our British historians, states that the Gospel began to be published here about the time of the memorable revolt and overthrow of the Britons under *Ro-adicea*," which happened in the year 60 or 61, and was followed by a long interval of peace, which could not fail of proving favourable to the introduction of the new religion and the general success of its publishers. Speaking of the said revolt, together with its disastrous termination and consequences, *Gildas* adds, "In the mean time, Christ, the true Sun, afforded his rays, that is, the knowledge of his precepts, to this Island, benumbed with extreme cold, having been at a great distance from the sun; not the sun in the firmament, but the eternal sun in heaven."

This account, given by *Gildas*, is remarkably corroborated by the *Triads of the Isle of Britain*, which are ancient British documents of undoubted credit, though



but little known. \* From them we learn that the famous *Caradoc*, or *Caractacus*, having been overthrown in the war, and afterwards basely betrayed and delivered up to the Romans, by *Aregwedd Voeddig* (the *Cartis-mandua* of Roman authors) was, together with his father *Brân*, (or *Brennus*) and whole family, carried captive to Rome, about the year 52, where they were detained seven years, or more. At that time Rome enjoyed the preaching of the gospel, and Brân with others of the family became converts to the christian religion. After the expiration of their captivity, they returned home, and were the means of introducing the knowledge of Christ among their countrymen: on which account, Brân is called, one of the three holy sovereigns, and his family, one of the three holy lineages of Britain. The Triads also have preserved the names of three of the primitive christians who accompanied Brân on his return to this country, and who were probably the very first christian ministers that ever set foot on this island: one was an Israelite of the name of *Ilid*; of the other two, one was called *Cyndav*, and the other *Arwystli Hên*, or Arwystli the aged. † This account is very curious, and, in all probability, authentic. §

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\* "The *Triads of the Isle of Britain*, are some of the most curious and valuable fragments preserved in the Welsh language. They relate to persons and events, from the earliest times to the beginning of the seventh century."—Owen's preface to the *Works of Llywarch Hen*.

† Supposed to be the *Aristobulus* of the New Testament.

§ See *British Archæology*, lately published: Also Owen's *Cambrian Biography*.

When Brân returned to his native country, it has been understood that some of his family staid behind and settled at Rome. Of them *Claudia*, mentioned, along with *Pudens* and *Linus*, in the second Epistle to Timothy, is supposed to be one, and the very same with *Claudia the wife Pudens*, mentioned by the poet *Martial*, who lived in those times, and who celebrates her, in his Epigrams, as a *Briton* of extraordinary beauty, wit, and virtue. To this it has indeed been objected, that *Martial*, living in the reign of *Trajan*, cannot be supposed to speak of Paul's *Claudia*, who flourished in the reigns of *Claudius* and *Nero*. But it might be urged in reply, that though he lived in *Trajan's* reign, he lived also, and resided at Rome, in the reign of *Vespasian*, if not in that of *Nero*; and the Epigrams in which he mentions *Claudia* might be written in his younger years, when she was in the prime and bloom of life. Some have made her to be the *daughter of Caractacus*, which seems not at all unlikely. *Pomponia Græcina*, the wife of *Aulus Plautius*, *Claudius' Lieutenant*, and the first Roman Governor here, has also been thought a *Briton* and a christian, and one of the earliest British Christians. *Tacitus* speaks of her as an illustrious lady, but accused for having embraced a *strange and foreign superstition*; † and though he says she was acquitted, as to any thing immoral, yet he represents her as leading ever after a *gloomy and melancholy kind of life*: all which will strictly coincide with the idea of her being a *christian*. *Tacitus* could conceive or express himself no otherwise of a person dissenting

† Annal. l. 13. C. 22.

from his own pagan tenets, or of a religion disallowed by the Roman law, which was with him the standard of truth, rectitude, and orthodoxy. The above accusation and trial of Pomponia Græcina took place, it seems, while Nero and Calphurnus Piso were Consuls, and after Paul had come to Rome the first time, and therefore she may not unreasonably be supposed one of his converts.

Other authorities render it highly probable, that some of those captives had embraced christianity during their residence at Rome; but the *Triads*, above-mentioned, may be said to settle the point, and reduce the matter to a certainty. They were documents formed on purpose to preserve and perpetuate the memory of remarkable and interesting events; of which sort may justly be considered, the conversion of Brân and family, and their introducing christianity into this island. There is every reason to conclude, that the religion of the first British christians was venerably simple, pure, and perfect, like what appears in the New Testament, and very widely different from that of the men of the present generation. But this subject we will now drop, and resume the thread of the narrative. \*

\* Before the introduction of christianity, the prevailing and established religion of Britain and of Gaul, was Bardism, or Druidism, as it is more commonly called, of which very different accounts have been given by different authors. According to our best informed antiquaries and most competent judges, it was of very remote if not of patriarchal origin, and exhibited for no short period a most strikingly rational and venerable appearance. It taught the existence, unity, spirituality, and benevolence of the Supreme Being; also the doctrine of a future state, of providence, and the immortality of the soul: but it taught withal the transmigration of the soul, and even the final salvation of the whole human race, with other tenets equally grating to an orthodox ear. Its fundamental object and principle were a diligent search after truth,



SECTION III. *The ancient history of Lynn continued—the town supposed to have been founded by a colony of foreigners, introduced by the Romans—etymology of its name—mistakes of Camden, Spelman, &c. pointed out.*

The great project formed by the Romans of embanking, draining, and improving these fens and marshes, is said to have been executed by a foreign colony, \*

and a rigid adherence to justice and peace. The religious Functionaries never bore arms, nor engaged in any party disputes. They were employed as heralds in war, and so sacred were their persons considered, in the office of mediators, that they passed unmolested through hostile countries, and even appeared, in the midst of battle, to arrest the arm of slaughter, while they executed their missions. So far they appear singularly dignified and respectable; but this did not always continue—like the priests of other professions, they, in time, departed from their original principles, and introduced various degrading changes, especially among the Gauls. In Britain the system was preserved in greater purity: hence the first families of Gaul sent their children hither for education, as Cesar testifies.

We have often heard Druidism represented as a monstrous and shocking system: but if it was so, it must have been in its corrupt, and not in its original state. Even christianity itself, in a corrupt state, becomes an object equally monstrous and shocking; but that can furnish no argument against genuine christianity, or the religion of the New Testament. As to the *human victims* which the Druids are said to have offered, they were, it seems, chiefly *malefactors*: in that view we may be said to have our human victims too, and that in far greater numbers probably, than those of the Druids. Our executions are very frequent, and the victims we thus offer up are more numerous than in any other country we know of. These victims we offer up to law and justice, but they are very few compared with the myriads upon myriads we have offered on the altar of injustice, persecution, ambition, and folly.

\* Badeslade, §. 3. page 15 — Colonizing was an essential branch of the Roman policy in conquered countries, and it is likely that such an important undertaking as that of recovering and improving these fertile parts, would be by them committed to colonists, such as they might introduce from Belgium, who must from their habits and employment at home, be peculiarly fitted for the task—Circumstances also lead us to think, that the work was begun here, which being highest the inhabited parts, seems to have been the right end, where common sense would dictate that it should commence.

brought over and settled here for that purpose, but, without doubt, powerfully assisted by the natives. This colony is presumed to have been of Batavian or Belgic origin; for where could the Romans have found a people so fit for their purpose as among the inhabitants of a country that so much resembles this, and who must have been, while at home, habituated to the work in which they were here to be employed? The vicinity of those countries to this, and their then subjection to the Romans, may be considered as further corroborating this opinion. From the exposed situation of Marshland, and its lying next to the inhabited part of the country, it may very reasonably be supposed, that these colonists would begin their work there, and even on its eastern side, about where Lynn now stands: and as they would immediately want habitations, it is very natural to conclude, that the town of Old Len, or Lynn, was built for, or by them, and that they were the very people that gave it its *name*. These conclusions appear remarkably countenanced and supported by that very name itself; for LEN, in the *Celtic* (or *Belgio-celtic*) dialect, or language, is said to signify a *Fen*, *Morass*, or *Marsh*. † LEN, therefore, as they applied, or used the word here, might mean a town by a morass, the town in the marsh, or the chief town and mother town of Marshland and the Fens. This seems to be, by far, the most tenable and satisfactory explanation of the name of this ancient town, that has ever yet been offered or suggested.

† Salen. Village au bord d'un Marais. Sal, bord; Len, marais. Mullet, *Memoires Sur la langue Celtique*. Tom. 1. p. 136.

*Camden* derives the name of *Lynn* from the British word *Llyn*, which signifies *a lake*; but circumstances do not at all support that idea. There was anciently at *Lynn* no very large collections of waters: its very river was inconsiderable, consisting only of the water of the *Little Ouse*, and the *Wissey*, together with that of the *Nar*, or *Setch* river, formerly called *Len*, and sometimes *Sandringham Ea.* ‡ The very harbour also, for many ages, was remarkably narrow. As to the waters below, in the roads, it is very unlikely that the Britons should call them *Llyn*, (i.e. *Lake*,) a name which they never appear to have given to similar collections of water: but if we were to admit, that they actually gave that name to these waters, still it would seem exceedingly improbable, that this place should derive its name from thence, any more than *Rising*, or other towns that are situated near to the like estuaries, or arms of the sea. *Spelman's* conjectures on this point are weaker and more untenable still. He would have the name to be derived from the Saxon *Læn*, or *Lean*, signifying, as he says, a *farm*, or *tenure in fee*; but which sense, according to *Hicks*, is unusual: nor is it likely, as *Gough* has observed, that this tenure should be more particularized here than elsewhere. \* Equally futile is what he further advances, "that *Len* is Saxon for church-land; whence *Ter Llen*, in Welsh, is church-land:" which is most strangely confounding those two languages, as if the one had sprung from the other. Nor is it strictly true, that *Ter llen* in welsh

‡ *Ey*, is also said to have been another of its names.

\* See *Gough's* Edition of *Camden's Britannia*.



means *church-land*, or even that there is such a welsh word in being. *Tir llan* might, indeed, have such a meaning, but it does not seem to be ever used in that sense. *Llen* or *Llëen*, in that language, means *literature*, and not church; and as an adjective, it means *literary*, *scholastic*, or *clerical*; whence *gwyr llen*, or *llëen*, signifies the *clergy*, as *gwyr lleyg*, or *lleygion* does the *laity*. But all this can make nothing for Spelman's point, and it must, of course, fall to the ground.—That Lynn ever went by the name *Maidenburg*, from saint Margaret the virgin, seems to be another of the idle whimsies of dreaming antiquarians. Of all such dreamers none perhaps ever exceeded *Parkin*, the continuator of Blomefield the Norfolk historian: whenever he is at a loss for the etymology of the name of any town or village, he generally refers to the *British*, and pretends to explain it accordingly. Never is he more ready or flippant than when speaking of the signification of British words; of which, at the same time, he knew nothing at all.

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SECTION IV. *Lynn the mother-town of the Fens—further account of its supposed founders and original inhabitants—remarkable works executed by them—great improvers of the country—the account continued to the extinction of the Roman power.*

Lynn, as has been already suggested, was, in all probability, the very first town built by the above mentioned colonists, and so the mother town of that exten-

sive country, which they were the means of recovering, improving, and securing from the annoyance of the salt and stagnant waters. Being their original dwelling place, it may naturally be supposed, that it would continue afterward to be their principal habitation or settlement, although in the progress of their work, and as they advanced further on, other dwellings and villages would of course be constructed and inhabited. Considering these people as originally from Belgium or Batavia, than which nothing is more likely, it may from thence be inferred, that the intercourse between Lynn and the Low Countries must have been of very early origin. Some connection or traffick between these colonists and their mother country may fairly be supposed to have commenced from their very first settlement here: so that the trade and intercourse between Lynn and the Netherlands may be concluded to be now of above seventeen hundred years standing.

Those industrious colonists seem not to have, in the least, disappointed the hopes or expectations of their employers. They appear to have carried on and executed the work with great diligence, skill, and success. It is probable, as before hinted, that they began on the eastern side of Marshland, (that being nighest the habitable or inhabited part of the country, and where also their first town or settlement would naturally be erected) and from thence extended their labours to Wisbeach, and so on to the Marshes of Holland, in Lincolnshire, and other parts of the country which they were to recover and improve. The Banks which they constructed

in their progress were large, high, and firm, and such as effectually secured the country from the incursion and depredation of the sea. They are still known, in most places, and even on the eastern side of the Ouse and in the vicinity of Lynn, by the name of the *Roman Banks*. Nor does it appear that they were less judicious or successful in their attempts to drain and improve the parts which they had so well and effectually rescued from the Ocean's destructive power; for by accounts handed down from ancient writers, it would seem that the country whithin their banks, at least a great part of it, was soon brought to an admirable state of cultivation, improvement, and fertility, like another paradise, and remained so for many ages. \*

Even *roads*, of considerable length and width, appear to have been made by the same people in this new recovered and marshy country, constructed of gravel of no small depth and breadth, and formed in a most masterly manner: of which that leading from *Denver* to *Peterborough*, or rather, perhaps, to *Castor*, or *Cais-ter* in Northamptonshire, is a most remarkable, and very striking instance. This road, according to *Dugdale* (as has been already observed in the *Introduction*) was composed of gravel, three feet deep, and sixty wide: at present, it is said to be covered with a moorish soil, from three to five feet thick. The constructing of such a road, and carrying it for so many miles, through a country almost totally destitute of gravel, stone, or any other materials proper for road-making,

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\* Henry of Huntingdon, William of Malmsbury, Dugdale, &c.



which must therefore have been procured from a vast distance, and with immense labour and difficulty, must have been a very extraordinary and stupendous achievement. In comparison with which, how puny are the efforts and performances of our modern adventurers, or commissioners of roads, in this flat country! A proof of this we have in the great Turnpike Road that leads from *St. German's* to *Wisbeach*, where attempts have been making now for some years to cover it with gravel, but hitherto with no very great effect. At any rate, it must appear, that those ancient Colonists, introduced by the Romans, for the purpose of recovering and improving this great fen-country, were eminently qualified for the work in which they were employed, and ought to be still held in grateful remembrance by the good people of England, especially those of Marshland and the Fens, and esteemed among their very best benefactors.—The merit of those works and improvements, however, should not be *all* ascribed to them: the *Romans*, who introduced, employed, and maintained them, and who projected the undertaking, should be allowed some share of it. Nor are the *natives*, or Britons, who laboriously, powerfully, and effectually assisted in carrying on those works and improvements, to be entirely overlooked or forgotten on this occasion. The latter are said to have borne so large a share in those laborious undertakings, as to occasion very serious complaints and remonstrances from some of their countrymen to, and against the Romans, as having cruelly exhausted their strength, by the excessive hardships and fatigues they had been obliged to undergo in that service. Nor is this at all incredible; for

the Romans are known to have been often very unfeeling, severe, and cruel task-masters to the nations they had subdued. If the country was improved it was always at the expense of the sweat and treasure, and not unfrequently of the groans and lives of its inhabitants.

The improvements begun in and about the fens, as well as in other parts of the country, were probably in some measure attended to during the whole continuance of the Roman power in this island. On the decline of that power, and especially after the departure of the Roman legions, there is reason to believe that they were neglected and relinquished. The grievous and calamitous scenes which then ensued, would leave no room or opportunity for such pursuits as could be attended to only in the happy seasons of internal tranquillity.

Although we have considered the original inhabitants of Lynn, Marshland, and the Fens, as consisting for the most part of colonists from the continent, we are probably not warranted to conclude, that they were in fact, a Roman Colony, or invested with the rights and immunities of Roman citizens. It may, however, be very reasonably supposed, that they were favoured with some particular privileges, to which, indeed, they appear to have been very justly entitled. But whatever they might be, it is not likely that they enjoyed them for any great length of time after the dissolution of the Roman government here: the country then soon fell a prey to foreign and merciless invaders, and every thing was involved in universal confusion and ruin.

## CHAP. II.



On the immediate consequences of the abdication of the country by the Romans, and the probable fate of Lynn.

SECTION I. *Character of the Anglo-Saxons, with general observations on the invasion and conquest of this country by them, and their barbarous treatment of the inhabitants.*

The Saxons, who soon succeeded the Romans in the possession of this country, were never very remarkable for forming and encouraging projects of improvement, or for cultivating the arts of peace. They were, indeed a very different sort of people from the others, and possessed all their bad qualities without any of their good ones. They had long been distinguished as a fierce and lawless race, a nation of pirates, and freebooters, like the modern *Algierines*, whose chief delight consisted in predatory expeditions, and all manner of acts of violence and brutality, which passed with them for national virtue, patriotism, and military glory.

Long before they had effected any settlement in Britain, they used to make frequent descents upon the



coast, particularly that of Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex. To guard against which, the Romans not only kept a fleet cruising in these seas, but also built a chain of forts in the most convenient places, which they had well garrisoned. These forts were nine in number, and extended from Brancaster to Yarmouth, and thence down a considerable way along the coast; and (as was before observed) the troops here stationed, a good part of which consisted of cavalry, were under the command of an officer called, *The Count of the Saxon shore*. This provision, or precaution, however, proved, too often, but a very imperfect security against the sudden inroads of those ancient and daring marauders. \*

\* The Saxons, as before hinted, were long distinguished from other nations for their piratical propensities, and predatory adventures, as well as for the success that generally attended their favourite operations. It was no wonder, therefore, if their neighbours would by degrees become attached to similar pursuits: and that it did so happen is undeniable. "In the ninth century (says a respectable historian) it was an established custom in the North, that all the *sons of kings* except the eldest, should be furnished with ships properly equipped, in order to carry on the dangerous, but not dishonourable profession of piracy.'—So reputable was the pursuit, that parents were even anxious to compel their children into that desperate and detestable occupation. By an extraordinary enthusiasm for which, they would not suffer their children to inherit the wealth which they had gained by it. It was their practice to command their gold, silver, and other property to be buried with them. [see Turner's History of the Anglo Saxons, and Edinburgh Review No. 6. p. 368]—Here it may not be improper to observe, that what determined the Saxons to piratical enterprizes was a most daring, singular, and memorable achievement of a numerous body of their neighbours and allies the Franks, whom the emperor Probus had transported from their own country, on the borders of the Rhine, to the distant shores of the Euxine, with a view of weakening the strength of that warlike nation, which was so very formidable to the neighbouring Roman provinces. These exiles, though removed to a country not inferior to their own, could not bear the idea of seeing their native land no more. There is what may be called a law of nature, which attaches us to the region where we first drew our breath, or spent our childish and youthful

Of all the nations of the north, the Saxons appear to have been the most barbarous and most sanguinary. The *Franks*, who conquered Gaul, were a civilized people

days, and which makes it often most painful to think of being for ever separated from it. So it seems to have been with those exiled Franks. Unable to bear the thought of a perpetual separation from their kindred and native country, they seized the earliest opportunity of abandoning their appointed settlement, and regaining what appeared to them the sweetest blessings of life. "They possessed themselves of many ships, and formed the astonishing plan of sailing back to the Rhine. Who were their pilots, or how they conceived, in their untutored minds, the possibility of a project so intricate, and, for such barbarians, so sublime, has not been revealed to us. Its novelty and magnanimity ensured it success. They ravaged Asia and Greece; not for safety merely, but revenge and plunder were also their objects. Landing in Sicily, they attacked and ravaged Syracuse with great slaughter. They carried their triumphant hostility to several districts of Africa, and sailing adventurously to Europe, they concluded their insulting and prosperous voyage by reaching in safety their native shores."—This amazing enterprize discovered to them and their neighbours, that from the Roman colonies a rich harvest of spoil might be gleaned by those who would seek for it at sea. They had desolated every province almost with impunity; they had plunder to display, which must have fired the avarice of every needy spectator; they had acquired skill, which they who joined them might soon inherit; and perhaps the same adventurers, embarking again with new followers, evinced by fresh booty the practicability of similar attempts."—The Saxons, then inhabiting the parts about the Elbe and Heiligoland, are supposed to be among the first to emulate the exploits of the returned exiles.—Thus originated that system of piracy by which the northern nations were so long distinguished, and for which the Saxons were for many ages deservedly infamous. They became by degrees so powerful and formidable by sea, like the modern English, that some of the competitors for the Roman imperial dignity actually formed alliances with them, in order to insure their own success.—Like ourselves, and perhaps with equal justice, they seemed to aim at the sovereignty of the ocean: but among all their deeds of infamy, it is doubtful if any one of them ever exceeded in baseness and atrocity our own late memorable expedition to Copenhagen, though conducted by such as made pretension even to piety and evangelism, which indeed but rendered it the more detestable.—In vain we look to Algiers and Tunis for more flagitious or fouler deeds. [See *Hellfried's Outlines of a Political survey of the English Attack on Denmark*.—and for an account of the expedition of the Franks, and the Saxon and northern piracies, see *Turner*, as before.]



compared with them. Of the use of letters they were totally ignorant. All knowledge that had not some affinity with piracy, or tendency to improve their system of rapine and devastation, was by them held in the utmost contempt and abhorrence. *Gildas*, who was born but a few years after their arrival in this country, describes them as a most fierce and detestable people, “a nation odious both to God and man.” ‡ They were invited here to assist the inhabitants in opposing the incursions of the *Picts* and *Scots*; but they soon turned their arms against their infatuated employers, and converted the war into a system of extermination.

Their countrymen on the continent long retained the original character of their nation. During many ages they continued preeminent for their bloodthirsty disposition and savage manners. *Charlemagne* subdued them, after a thirty years war, and forced them to become converts to *his* christianity, and submit to baptism; but their ferocity he did not subdue, nor had their conversion any effect towards humanizing them. They were, however, *called christians*: which was like calling evil, good, or Satan, an angel of light. These Saxon christians, in the twelfth century, quarrelled with the *Venedi*, a neighbouring nation, because they objected against embracing *their* christianity, and refused to renounce their own paganism, which they seemed to prefer, for its cheapness. The former they found to be an institution attended with an expence which they could but ill support. Bishoprics were to be erected, with large reve-

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‡ *Gildas* Epistle. § xxiii.



nues, Monastaries to be endowed, and an annual tribute, under the name of tithes, to be paid by the whole country. Against this the Venedi remonstrated, to Bernard Duke of Saxony, the christian champion. They protested that they were very poor, and unable to bear any heavy burden, such as providing for the maintenance of priests, and especially for the dignity and parade of mitred prelates; that they were fully determined to suffer any extremity, even to abandon their country and state, rather than submit to so tyrannical an oppression. This firm opposition of theirs to the will of the christian potentate, or rather the Saxon tyrant, involved them in a long and bloody war, the final issue of which was, their utter extirpation, by Henry Duke of Saxony, surnamed the Lion, the great champion of the church on that occasion. The cruelty with which he disgraced his victory, was horrible. Few revolutions in history were attended with such circumstances of barbarity, or proved so destructive to the ancient inhabitants. \* Even Charlemagne, after he had subdued the Saxons, by a long and bloody war, did not attempt to destroy their whole race, but only transplanted a part, and the remainder he endeavoured to reconcile to his empire by the establishment of his christianity. But the

\* Henry the Lion, the prime actor in these brutal proceedings, was another time affronted by the inhabitants of *Bardewic*, one of the largest cities of Germany, for which he stormed it, and, except nine churches. left not one stone on another. No wonder that he is said to have been universally dreaded. He afterward quarrelled with the emperor Frederic Barbarossa, but there he was overmatched, and expelled from Germany. He then took refuge with his wife Matilda, at the court of our Henry II, his father-in-law. He was afterward restored to his hereditary domains only, Brunswick and Lunenburgh, to which august and illustrious house he belonged. [Nugent—Petit Andrews.]

Saxons, by far more cruel than the Franks, were of all conquerors the most destructive, extending the utmost rigour of the sword against those who dared to contend with them for liberty or empire. "In the same ferocious manner. (says the historian) their ancestors some centuries before had behaved in Britain, where they either massacred or expelled the greatest part of the natives, who had invited them over to their assistance. None of the other nations that overran the Roman Empire behaved with such cruelty to the conquered inhabitants, or were inflamed with such rancour and animosity, as to attempt to convert those provinces into deserts. The Goths, the Burgundians, the Lombards, instead of massacring the Romans in cold blood, and endeavouring to extirpate their whole race, enacted very just laws in favour of those people, in consequence of which the Romans and those fierce barbarians, their conquerors, were considered in the same light as fellow citizens. *Theodorick* king of Italy, a Gothic prince, upon sending an army into Gaul, makes use of these words to his general, which deserve to be inscribed on pillars of brass, "Let other kings delight in the plunder and devastation of the towns they have subdued; we are desirous to conquer in such a manner, that our new subjects shall lament their having fallen too late under our government."

\* How much happier had it been for the Britons to have been invaded by *Theodorick* than by the Saxons!

From the above account of the character of the ancient

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\* See Nugent's Hist. of Vandalia: also Monthly Review 35. 174.

Saxons, one may be enabled to form a pretty just, but shocking idea of the miseries in which they involved the wretched inhabitants of this country, and those of Lynn and its vicinity among the rest. The exterminating war which they here waged, and the horrid devastation which attended their successful progress, have been recorded by Gildas, who himself lived at that eventful period, and must have been an eye-witness to no small portion of the direful events which he describes. Nothing can exceed the tragical description he gives of the diabolical and destructive operations of those brutal invaders. He represents the whole country, and especially the western parts, near to which he chiefly resided, as entirely laid waste with fire and sword, and the inhabitants massacred wherever they could be found. Of the wretched remnant, some fled to foreign countries, others retired to the mountains, or hid themselves in deserts and fastnesses, where, however, they could not long remain:—drawn forth by the pressing calls of hunger and famine, multitudes were forced to surrender to the merciless foe, begging that their lives might be spared, on the abject and miserable condition of submitting to perpetual slavery. Even of these not a few appear to have been instantly consigned to destruction. † Others, however, were spared; and from them, in all probability, sprung the *Servi*, or slaves, with which the country abounded for many ages after. ‡ Some of the wretch-

† Gildas, as before, xxiv, xxv.

‡ They are mentioned in Domesday, and by many of our topographical writers, without attempting to account for their origin. Their condition seemed as abject as that of our modern West India Negroes.



ed inhabitants were so fortunate as to make their escape to their countrymen, either in *Wales*, or in *Devon* and *Cornwal*, or else in *Cumberland* and the northern parts, where they made a noble stand, and long maintained their liberty and independence,

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SECTION II. *Of the ANGLES, from whom England, and the English language derive their names—they seize on the parts about Lynn, and the whole province of the ancient ICENI, which receives the denomination of East Anglia, and forms one of the kingdoms of the heptarchy—revival of Lynn in the mean time—with remarks on the adjacent country.*

Those Saxon conquerors of our island consisted of different clans, or tribes, one of which went by the name of *Angles*; and though they are not generally supposed to have composed the principal or most numerous part of the invaders, yet it so happened, that the whole of the conquered country and also the language of its new inhabitants took their names from them. They took possession of the ancient country, or province of the

We seldom hear of them after the bloody contest between the rival houses of York and Lancaster, which proved to them, it seems, a most beneficial contest, as it occasioned their emancipation, in order the more easily to recruit the contending armies. As the lust of Henry VIII. proved favourable to the success of the reformation, so the ambition of those rival houses, proved, it seems, no less so to the manumission of these poor slaves.

Iceni, and there founded the kingdom of East Anglia, or of the East Angles, comprehending the present counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge, and Huntingdon, which made some figure among its sister kingdoms in the time of the Heptarchy. The kingdom of Mercia and that of Northumberland also, it seems, were inhabited by the same people.

Of Lynn, during that dark and disastrous period, no account has been preserved. It was probably destroyed by those merciless invaders, during their long and bloody contest with the ill fated natives, along with many other towns, all over the country, which certainly met the same fate. \* At what time it revived, or rose again into existence, is no where recorded. But from the convenience and advantage of its situation it may be supposed to have done so pretty soon after the government of the East-Angles had assumed a settled form, and acquired a competent or tolerable share of stability. That it existed under the East-Anglian kings, seems a very natural and credible supposition; but whether it stood then on the western side only, or on both sides of the river, cannot now be ascertained. Under the Saxon princes that succeeded the dissolution of the Heptarchy, it is well known to have extended to the eastern shore of the river; and it is then, most probably, that we are to date the origin of the present town or borough of

\* That this country, in the time of the Romans, contained many populous, flourishing, and well-built towns, is allowed on all hands; and that they were mostly overthrown and destroyed by the invading Saxons, is confirmed by the testimony of Gildas; it may therefore very naturally be concluded, that the original Lynn was involved in the common fate of its neighbours.—See Gildas, No. xxiv.

Lynn. In the time of Edward, called the confessor, we find it a place of trade and considerable note; a plain proof that it must have been in being, and growing into consequence a good while before that period. It belonged then to *Ailmar*, bishop of Elmham, and his brother *Stigand*, archbishop of Canterbury, when blind superstition and ecclesiastical servility may naturally be supposed to have been among the principal or most distinguished characteristics of its inhabitants. It continued afterward under episcopal domination and ghostly discipline till the memorable reign of Henry VIII. who thought proper to take into his own hands that power or supremacy which was before vested in the bishops. In consequence of which, it has ever since been called *KING'S Lynn*, instead of *BISHOP'S Lynn*, which was its former appellation: an appellation, by the bye, which will serve further to corroborate the idea, that it was formerly the deleterious abode of priest-ridden credulity and ecclesiastical thralldom. Indeed it may be said to have been long distinguished for illiberality, intolerance, and a persecuting spirit: and it must appear somewhat remarkable, that the very first person taken up and burnt, in England, under that diabolical law, *De hæretico comburendo*, was a Lynn man, as was also the last, or one of the very last that underwent persecution for nonconformity under the infamous *conventicle Act*: The former was one of the preachers belonging to St. Margarets Church, in the reign of *Henry IV.* and the latter a licenced dissenting minister in that of *William III.* Of each of them a more particular account shall be given in its proper place.



Not only Lynn; but most, if not all, of the adjacent towns and villages appear to have been in being long before the conquest. They are noticed in the celebrated old record, called *Domesday*, as places then in existence, and seemingly of long standing and remote origin. They had, in all probability, been erected and inhabited many ages before that period, though it seems not likely that many of their present names, or those given them in the *Domesday* book, are to be traced to a British origin, as Parkin and others pretend.

That Lynn had become a place of considerable trade in the Saxon times, or before the Norman invasion, is evident from unquestionable existing documents. It had then a toll-booth, and enjoyed certain duties and customs, payable on the arrival of any goods or merchandise, of which the bishop was in full possession of a moiety. This episcopal privilege is supposed to have been as early as the conversion of the East Angles, and establishment of christianity among them. The town continued daily to flourish and acquire increasing importance; and at an early period after the conquest, one of the writers of that time calls it, "a noble city," on account of its trading and commercial magnificence. \* This was at a period when Hull did not exist, and when Liverpool, if it did exist, was but a very obscure and insignificant place.

† Parkin, p p. 69. 115.

\* William of Newburgh,—Gibson's Camden —Parkin 116,

SECTION III. *Of the Saltworks formerly at and about Lynn—paucity of appropriate materials—apology.*

The vicinity of Lynn in the Saxon times, and long after, appears to have been remarkable for its numerous Saltworks.\* At Gaywood alone, in the Confessor's time, there were no less than *thirty* Salt pans, or pits. † The Salt springs of Droitwich, Nantwich, Northwich, &c. were then, it seems, not so much attended to as to afford a supply to the distant parts of the kingdom. The people of these parts were therefore obliged to manufacture their own salt. To what extent the work was carried on, or what quantity was generally, or annually produced, cannot now be ascertained. Nor are we informed of the particular mode, or process adopted and pursued in carrying on this ancient manufactory. It was, probably, pretty simple, and not very unlike that used in latter times in the salt-works of South-town, by Yarmouth, and at other places. By the great number of Salt-works then at Lynn, or in its neighbourhood, it seems probable, that a considerable part of the adjacent country, and the interior districts, were supplied from thence with that necessary article: which might easily, even at that early period, be conveyed thither, by means of the inland navigation, which always gave to Lynn the vast advantage of a free and easy intercourse with all those places, however distant, that are situated near the banks, or in the neighbourhood of its numerous rivers. The Salt manufactured here was made, it seems, from the sea water which the

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\* Parkin, 237.

† Ibid. 69.

tides brought up to the town, and which must have been, of course, much less salt, and less fit for the purpose than the water found below in the roads, or at sea: it appears therefore rather odd, that those salt-works should be placed so far up the country, or so distant from the sea: and yet so it was; every village and hamlet, almost, had then its Salt-work, or the moiety of one.\* Here it may be proper to observe, that, at the periods of which we have been speaking, salt was not an article of revenue, and must therefore have been a pretty cheap commodity compared to what it is now, when the duty laid upon it by government is said to be above ten times its prime, or original cost.

In attempting to give an account of the state of things at Lynn during the period which we are now contemplating, almost all our light must be borrowed from the general history of the kingdom in the mean while, as the paucity of materials, relating particularly to this town, leaves us, for the most part, no other clew for our guidance. The reader must not therefore be displeased with the method here generally pursued, in exhibiting the state or history of Lynn under its East-Anglian and Anglo-Saxon sovereigns.

\* Of those Salt-works the present writer regrets his inability to give the reader a more particular and satisfactory account; but as he has hitherto met with nothing that gives him any further light upon the subject, it must be here dismissed: but it shall be again resumed, in case any new discovery should be made before the work is completed. Our topographical writers, as well as our old records, only alledge the existence of numerous salt-works in these parts, without attempting a description of them, or of the process therein pursued, or even so much as giving any hints, or intimations, to assist and direct our inquiries.



## CHAP. III.



Of the religious profession of the first Anglian inhabitants of Lynn—their renouncing heathenism, and assuming the christian name—account of their conversion, and character of their christianity.

SECTION I. *Heathenism the religion of the first inhabitants of this town after its revival, or restoration, under the East-Anglian government—they, and the rest of the East Angles, together with the other branches of the Heptarchy, become professors of christianity—account of their conversion.*

The inhabitants of Lynn, after it had been rebuilt and repeopled by its Anglian masters, appear to have been blind heathens, and gross idolaters; for when the Angles, or Anglo-saxons seized upon this country, and founded the East-Anglian kingdom, they were a nation of pagans, worshippers of *Thor* and *Woden*, and the rest of the miserable objects of northern, or Scandinavian adoration; and so continued till the seventh century. At that period, one of their princes, named *Sigebert*, having lived sometime in exile among the Franks, was there converted to christianity. At his restoration to his kingdom, he brought over with him one *Felix*, a Burgun-

dian priest, who was employed in recommending to the people the religion of their sovereign, in which he appears not to have been unsuccessful. He was consequently appointed the first bishop of the East Angles, and had his see fixed at *Soham*, \* in Cambridgeshire, and afterwards at *Domnoc*, or *Dunwich*, in Suffolk. He is said to have taken no small pains in promoting the conversion of the inhabitants; and the parts about Lynn seem to have engaged a considerable share of his attention. In these very parts he is reported to have commenced his labours, which issued in the conversion of the whole country. Tradition gives to *Babingley*, by Lynn, the honour of being the place where he first landed, and where was erected the very first christian chapel, or place of worship among the East Angles. The second edifice of the same description is said to have been erected at *Sharnborn*, in the same neighbourhood. At what time the first place of that sort was built at Lynn, cannot now be determined; but it seems very probable that it must have been as early, at least, as the middle part of the seventh century. It cannot, however be said, that the christianity then introduced was of any great value. The national character was not much, if at all, mended by it; and the people still remained grossly ignorant, profligate, and savage. What they wanted in rational piety and real christianity, they made up in stupid credulity, blind zeal, and miserable superstition; and it had been well if their descendants had always carefully avoided the imitation of their wretched and pernicious example.

\* Beauties of England, 2. 149.

It is somewhat remarkable that christianity, as it was called, was not received among the East-Angles till it had made considerable progress in most of the other kingdoms of the Heptarchy. In Kent it had been received about the year 526, or soon after, by the ministry of *Austin* the monk: and even before that time, several years, some of the Kentish people had been brought to think favourably of that religion, by the means of *Luidhart*, a French bishop, who had accompanied the princess *Birtha*, daughter of Cherebert, king of Paris, upon her marriage with *Ethelbert* the Kentish king. The conversion of the East Saxons took place about the beginning of the seventh Century under the ministry of *Mellitus*, their first bishop: and soon after, that of the Northumbrians, where *Paulinus* appeared as a very active and successful labourer.

Felix did not begin his labours among the East Angles till about the year 630, when that religion had made some progress in all the other kingdoms, perhaps, except that of Mercia, which seems to have been the last of the seven to adhere to the profession of paganism. The Mercians, however, were afterwards converted, and their country, at one time, formed into an archiepiscopal province, whose seat or metropolis was *Litchfield*. Thus the different branches of the hierarchy were all, by degrees, nominally christianized. Of the nature, character, and value of that christianity, a just and proper idea may be formed from the following representations.



SECTION. II. *Effects of the conversion of the East-Angles, and the other sister-kingdoms—character of their christianity.*

No sooner were the good people of this country converted from paganism than *monkery* began to be in great request among them. Many monasteries were accordingly founded in all parts of England, which were quickly crowded with inhabitants. A fondness for the monastic life is said to have been here very much increased by an impious doctrine which began to be broached and believed toward the close of the seventh century, “That as soon as any person put on the habit of a monk, all the sins of his former life were forgiven.” This is said to have engaged many princes and great men (who are sometimes as great sinners as their inferiors) to put on the monkish habit, and end their days in monasteries; which, whatever it might be to themselves, was, probably, no mighty loss to their subjects and vassals, or to the world.

Another remarkable feature in the character of the English christians of the seventh and following centuries, was an extravagant veneration for *relics*; in which the Romish priests drove then a very gainful trade, as few good christians thought themselves safe from the perils or disasters of life, and the machinations of the devil, unless they carried about them the relics of some saint: nor could any church be dedicated without a decent or certain quantity of the same sacred and precious ware. \*

\* *Canute*, one of the greatest and wisest of our kings, next to *Alfred*, had a mighty veneration for relics, and even employed agents in foreign

Stories of *dreams*, *visions*, and *miracles* were also propagated without a blush, by the clergy, and believed without a doubt, by the laity. Extraordinary *watchings*, *fastings*, and other arts of tormenting the body in order to save the soul, became frequent and fashionable; and it began to be believed in the seventh century, that a journey to Rome was a most meritorious undertaking, and even, of all others, the most direct road to heaven.—Such was the christianity of the good people of Lynn and the rest of their countrymen in those days.

In the eighth century the humour of making pilgrimages to Rome, and of retiring into monasteries, still increasing, *Coinred* king of Mercia, as *Henry* informs us, laid down his sceptre, and took up the pilgrim's staff, in 709, and travelled to Rome, accompanied by *Offa*, a young prince of the royal family of the East-

countries to purchase and collect them for him. One of these, an archbishop of Canterbury, called *Agelnoth*, being at Rome, in 1021, purchased, of the Pope, an arm of St. Austin, bishop of Hippo, for an hundred talents, or 6000 pound weight of silver, and one talent, or sixty pound weight of gold. A prodigious sum! greater (says *Granger*) than the finest statue of antiquity would then have sold for. It may enable us, as another historian observes, to form some idea of the unconscionable knavery of the sellers, and the astonishing folly and superstition of the purchasers of those commodities. Enormous sums were then expended in the purchase of relics, and the roads between England and Rome were so crowded with pilgrims, that the very tolls which they paid were objects of importance to the princes through whose territories they passed: few Englishmen, as *Henry* expresses it, imagined they could get to heaven without paying this compliment to St. Peter, who kept the keys of the celestial regions.—Such was the wisdom, and such the piety and christianity of the people of this country in former times, and for many ages.—Even Alfred, according to *Rapin*, was much attached to relics, and received, with no small satisfaction and gratitude, those sent him as presents from the Pope, and from Abel Patriarch of Jerusalem. His foibles, however, were greatly overbalanced by his great qualities, good deeds, and shining virtues.

Saxons, where they both became monks. Not long after, *Ina*, the warlike and victorious king of the West Saxons imitated their example, and ended his days in a cloister at Rome, where he founded a house for the entertainment of English pilgrims, and the education of English youth.

Great numbers of *nuns* also, and other English women, were among those devout pilgrims who then travelled to Rome: but we have the testimony of *Winfred*, alias *Boniface*, archbishop of Mentz, who lived at that period, that they were generally debauched before they returned, and even that many of them became common prostitutes in the cities of France and Italy: he therefore exhorts and charges his friend *Cuthbert*, then archbishop of Canterbury, to put a speedy stop to these scandalous female pilgrimages.

The religious prayers and songs, which constituted the church service, were then all in *latin*, and so not understood by the common people, who were therefore directed by the 27th. canon of the first council of Cloveshoos, or Cliff, in Kent, \* held in 747, to affix any meaning they pleased to the words in their own minds, and to pray in their hearts for any or every thing they wanted, no matter how foreign to the real sense of the public prayers. A curious salvo, says *Henry*, for the absurd practice of praying in an unknown tongue. The same canon contains also the following short form of prayer, *for the dead*; “Lord, according to the greatness of thy mercy, grant rest to his soul, and for thy infinite

\* Or rather Abingdon, in Berks, according to bishop Gibson.



pity, vouchsafe to him the joys of eternal light with thy saints."

Some of the nobility, or great men of that time, not very fond, it seems, of going themselves through all the fastings and prayers enjoined them by their confessors, would fain be allowed to have the service performed by proxy: and it appears that they actually hired and employed poor people to fast and pray in their stead. It was, certainly, a very notable as well as convenient device, and became, it seems, pretty fashionable, though it is said not to have the good fortune of obtaining the approbation of the said council of Cloveshoos. ‡

A late historian,\* alluding to this period, observes, that long fasting was then ordered frequently; but as the wealthy might abstain by proxy, a seven years fast might be performed in three days, if the principal could prevail with 840 persons each to take his share. This concise plan of atonement for crimes, (he adds) was condemned solemnly at the council of Cloveshoos; but the decree was disregarded." The practice therefore seems to have gone on unchecked, notwithstanding the decree of that council. It was not to be expected that so convenient a custom could be very easily abolished. It may be worth while to inquire, whether it had in it, after all, any greater absurdity, than there is in the present

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‡ Even now-adays, many of our gentry and wealthy people, are very strict in requiring their domestics and dependents regularly to attend at some place of worship, while they themselves live in the entire neglect of it! so that they too may be said to perform religious exercises *by proxy*.

\* Petit Andrews.

practice of the *infants* at the font, making a confession of their faith *by proxy*.

Towards the latter part of the above period, a law was enacted, enjoining every priest to learn some handicraft, or manual occupation: which might be very useful; at least, it could do no harm. Another law enjoined, that they should all be capable of repeating the *Creed*, and the *Lord's prayer*: which also might be very right and proper; but it indicates that learning was then at a very low ebb among the English clergy. We learn, however, that in the reign of *Ethelred*, styled *the unready*, a mission was sent from hence to Norway, at the request of the king of that country, to convert the Norwegians and Swedes to the christian religion, and that the archbishop of York, and other divines, actually went over on that occasion, and met with great success; though some of them afterwards are said to have suffered martyrdom; which seems rather odd, if the king, as above suggested, was their patron. Whatever their learning might be, their zeal must have been highly commendable and exemplary.

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SECTION III. *Christianity of the ancient inhabitants of Lynn, and of this country, further characterized—whether very materially improved during the reign of Alfred—remarks on that reign—papal instructions to the first missionaries.*

Ignorance and superstition, instead of diminishing, appear to have increased in England, during the *eighth* century. Pilgrimages to Rome became far more fre-

quent, and were attended with worse effects than formerly; the rage of retiring to monasteries became more violent in persons of all ranks, to the ruin of every useful art; the clergy became more knavish and rapacious, and the laity more abject and stupid, than at any former period: of which the trade of relics, then at its height, and which can never be carried on, but between knaves and fools, is a sufficient evidence.

During the memorable reign of the celebrated Alfred, the state of religion has been supposed to have improved; but how far we are warranted to admit, or carry that idea, does not seem very clear. Alfred was, doubtless, a most excellent prince, as may fairly and justly be inferred from that notable clause in his Will, “that the English had an undoubted right to be free as their own thoughts,” and particularly from his so greatly magnifying, and acting upon that never to be forgotten precept of Christ, “to do unto others as we would have others do unto us:” not to mention the many other notable and commendable deeds ascribed to him: \* but that he was instrumental in very materially reforming, or improving the religion of his country, appears rather doubtful, if not improbable. His altering the Ten Commandments, leaving out the *second*, and adding another, to humour the worshippers of images, make very considerably against the notion of his having much advanced the work of religious reformation. The commandment which he added, was expressed in these words, “Make not thou gods of gold, or of silver,”

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\* We regret that the *abolition* of slavery was *not* among them.



a precept, as it has been observed, which few of his subjects could afford to transgress. \*

From Alfred's days to the conquest, the religion of England experienced no amendment; nor ever after till the Era of the reformation, or the 16th. century, except what took place under the influence of Wickliff, and the Lollards; but they were soon crushed un-

\* The reign of Alfred, however, was certainly distinguished by numerous and important national benefits: war and internal disorder were made entirely to cease; learning, and the useful arts, revived and flourished; wholesome and important regulations were adopted and introduced, whose salutary effects are still felt; trade and commerce were much encouraged and extended: in all which, and especially the latter, Lynn, as may be presumed, must have been greatly interested. Alfred employed skilful and adventurous mariners, to explore the most distant northern regions, and (by means of *Ofthere*, supposed to be a banished Norwegian chief,) actually gained intelligence of the *Dwina*, on whose banks *Archangel* stands; a river not again spoken of in England, till 1553, when *Richard Chancellor* found his way to the White Sea. What follows is still more surprising: by means of a correspondence which Alfred engaged in with Abel, patriarch of Jerusalem, he heard of a sect of christians who lived in penury on the south eastern coast of Asia, the present *Coromandel*; and he chose a spirited priest, named *Sighelm*, to go and relieve those his oppressed brethren. By what track or rout this gallant adventurer proceeded, any further than Rome, we know not. It is certain that he reached the end of his journey, delivered the royal presents, and brought back from India many curious jewels, some of which were to be seen in the days of William of Malmsbury, at Sherborne Cathedral, of which see Alfred had made the fortunate and intrepid *Sighelm* bishop, after his return. Others of these jewels are believed still to exist in an old crown, kept in the tower of London.—After such enterprizes, to celebrate this great prince as the *inventor of horn-lanterns*, may be deemed ridiculous; yet nothing can less merit ridicule: there were then no Clocks in England; Alfred contrived wax tapers of a proper length, to last one, two, or more hours; and to prevent the winds from deranging his plans, he defended the taper, with thin, clear, *horn*. Such were the improved English *time keepers* of the 9th. century: the merit of which improvement, is due to Alfred; a merit not inferior, probably, to that of the *Harrisons* and *Arnolds* of modern times.—See Petit Andrews Hist. Gr. Britain.

der the heavy and strong hand of priestly and royal persecution: the very first victim, as was before observed, was a Lynn man.

From the above representation of the original christianity of the English nation, and of the Lynn people among the rest, one cannot be very much biassed in its favour. But we shall cease to wonder at its being no better, when we consider whence it proceeded, and under what sort of rules or maxims it was introduced. It was first brought hither and promulgated by *Austin*, a monk of the convent of St. Andrew's at Rome, accompanied by forty other Romish monks, all sent by the then Pope, whose name was *Gregory*, commonly called Gregory the first, and *Saint Gregory*, who was advanced to the papal chair in 590. Austin and his companions arrived here in 596. Among the instructions which pope Gregory gave Austin for the regulation of his conduct and ministry, the following are not the least remarkable.—“He was not to destroy the heathen temples of the English, but only to remove the images of their gods, to wash the walls with holy water, to erect altars, and deposit relics in them, and so convert them into christian churches; not only to save the expence of building new ones, but that the people might more easily be prevailed upon to frequent those places of worship, to which they had been accustomed. He directs him further, to accommodate the ceremonies of the christian worship as much as possible to those of the heathen, that the people might not be much startled at the change; and in particular he advises him to allow the christian converts, on certain festivals, to kill and eat a great num-

ber of oxen, to the glory of God, as they had done formerly to the honour of the devil." \* These admonitions, (says Dr. Henry) which were but too well observed, introduced the grossest corruption into the christian worship, and shew how much the apostles of the sixth and seventh centuries had departed from the simplicity and sincerity of those of the first.

\* It is curious and ludicrous enough to think of the difficulties that puzzled our celebrated missionary, after his arrival here, and of which he wrote to Rome for the solution. Of what sort they were, the reader will be able to judge from the following *queries* and *answers*; the former by the said missionary, *saint Austin*, and the latter by his infallible holy master, *saint Gregory*: *Query*. 1. "Are cousin germans allowed to marry?" *Answer*. This indulgence was formerly granted by the Roman law; but experience having shewn that no posterity can come from such marriages, they are prohibited. *Query*. 2. Is it lawful to baptize a woman with child? *Answer*. No inconvenience can arise from the practice. *Query*. 3. How soon after the birth may a child be baptized? *Answer*. Immediately if necessary. *Query*. 4. How soon may the husband return to the wife after her delivery? *Answer*. Not till after the child is weaned. *Query*. 5. How soon after sexual intercourse, is it lawful for a husband to enter the church? *Answer*. Not till he has purged himself by prayer and ablution." These nice and delicate queries, with more of the same sort, were accompanied by others concerning episcopal duties.—With the solution of these problems, the pope sent Austin the *pall*, (a piece of white woollen cloth, to be thrown over the shoulders, as a badge of archiepiscopal dignity;) sundry other ecclesiastical vestments and utensils, and instructions to erect twelve sees within his province, and particularly to appoint one at *York*, which, if the country should become christian, he was to convert into a province, with its suffragan bishops.—Thus did Austin become the first archbishop of Canterbury, and thus originated our ecclesiastical establishment, the renowned Church of England. [Aikin's Biogr. vol. 1.]—Among other counsels which Austin received from the pontiff on the above occasion, was an exhortation "not to be elated with vanity on account of the *miracles* which he had been enabled to perform in confirmation of his ministry, but to remember that this power was given, not for his own sake, but for the sake of those whose salvation he was appointed to procure."—Thus we have it from very high authority, that *the first archbishop of Canterbury was a worker of miracles*.



## CHAP. IV.



Miscellaneous observations, on the social distinctions, and the general state of the community among the Anglo-Saxons.

SECTION I. *State of society at Lynn, and in this country, before the Conquest.*

Of the state of Society in this country, as to the different ranks among the inhabitants, the following is thought to be a pretty fair and true representation.—The next rank below that of the royal family was held by the *Thanes*, which were, it seems, of different degrees, and we are told that the highest order among them went by the name of *king's thanes*. † These also are said to have been of two different sorts, *Eoldermen*, and *Eorles*; the former supposed to be supreme in the administration of justice; the latter comprehended military as well as civil authority, but was not hereditary till the close of

† The other orders were the middle and inferior thanes: the former are said to be the lesser barons, or lords of manors; and the latter made up the lowest degree of freeholders. Dyde Hist. Tewksbury. 141. — All others in the Anglo-saxon community below these thanes, who were the nobles of those times, are sometimes comprized under the heads of untitled freemen, and slaves——the latter, constituting the great mass of the inhabitants, were the property of their lords, like the present Russian or Bohemian peasantry.

the Saxon dynasty. The *Ceorles* (Charles, or Carles) were next below the thanes. They were free, descended from yeomen, and were chiefly engaged in husbandry. To them the gate of nobility was open, and they might become thanes by five different methods. § Another order, or description of men, in those times, was called *Huscarles*; (i. e. house-carles;) they were retainers, or domestic dependents of the thanes, and reputed freemen. All the rest of the community, it seems, were slaves, of different descriptions. Of them however, it would sometimes happen, though but very rarely, that some obtained manumission, and they formed a particular class, denominated *Freed-men*; but we are told that they were few, and little regarded. They could obtain, it seems, no rank in the state; and applying, for the most part, to mechanical employments, seem hardly to have been distinguished from the race which they had quitted.—Slaves were never suffered to carry arms, and the very gift of a weapon conferred freedom. Of the other orders no man went abroad without his spear; and laws were enacted to guard against damages occasioned by the careless bearer. In battle the *ceorles* who formed the infantry, beside a broad sword, and sometimes a club, bore only a round shield with an offensive pointed weapon in the centre. The cavalry being composed of thanes, *huscarles*, and the richer *ceorles*, who could afford to keep horses, was better provided with defensive armour. \*

The enslaved part of the inhabitants, and which is said to have constituted by far the most numerous class

§ Petit Andrews, 1. 88.

\* Henry, and Petit Andrews.

of the community, went, like the privileged orders, by different names. Of them the chief and most remarkable were the *Villani* and the *Servi*. In regard to the former, we are told that Villenage was of two kinds: 1st *Pure Villenage*, to which some were subject from their birth, from whom uncertain and indeterminate service was due to the lord. The successors of these are our *copy-holders*; who, though time has dealt favourably with them in other respects, still retain one mark of their original vassalage, or servitude; for as of old the former were not reckoned as members of the commonwealth, but merely as part and parcel of the owner's substance, no way entitled to the privileges of freemen, so do their successors still continue without any right to vote at elections by virtue of their copy-holds. 2nd *Villenage by Tenure*, which bound the tenant to perform certain services agreed upon between him and his lord; such as ploughing his ground, reaping his corn, &c.

The lowest, as well as most numerous class of slaves among the Anglo-saxons were the *Servi*, who, (as well as all the rest of the unfreemen,) were probably the descendants of the aboriginal inhabitants, who had escaped the general massacre, or whose lives had been spared at the reduction and conquest of the country. These were protected by neither law nor religion, for a very long period; and they consequently suffered the most unfeeling and cruel treatment. Christianity is said to have ameliorated their condition. It certainly ought



to have done so; but from such a christianity no material amelioration could well have been expected. Even our own boasted protestantism, how feeble has generally been its influence in such cases! The long and bloody contest between the rival and barbarous houses of York and Lancaster did more, it seems, for the relief and emancipation of those poor English slaves than any thing else; for the contending parties, in order to recruit and reinforce their armies, found it convenient and necessary to liberate great numbers of them: at length they were all manumitted, and Britain now contains no people of that description. It would be well if the same could be said of every other part of the British dominions, These Servi are often mentioned by Bloomfield and Parkin, and appear to have been very numerous in the parts about Lynn before the conquest, and even long after that period.

Beside the Villani and Servi, we meet with other descriptions of bondmen, whose condition seem to have been less abject; at least, less so than the latter. Of those one sort was called *Bordarii*, *Bordars*, or *Borderers*: they were such as held a cottage, or some small parcel of land, on condition of supplying the lord with poultry, eggs, and other small provisions for his board and entertainment. Such small estates were formerly called *Bord-lands*, now *demesnes*.—*Coliberti* was the name of another description of bondmen among the Anglo-Saxons; and they were, it seems, a middle sort of tenants, between servile and free; they had their patrons, to whom they paid rent, and were manumised as serv-

ants used to be, but were not absolutely free. They were such of the *Servi* as were enfranchised, or liberated in a certain degree, but still paid some duties to the superior lord. They appear to have been held in scarcely any higher estimation than the class to which they had originally belonged.—The *Burgaris*, *Burgenses*, or *Burgesses*, was another order of bondmen among the Anglo-Saxons. They were tradesmen in great towns, and had their patrons, under whose protection they traded, and to whom they paid an acknowledgement; but some of them were in a more servile condition, and altogether under the power of the king, or other lords. † Some of the above descriptions of Anglo-Saxon bondmen, or British slaves, and particularly the *Villani*, the *Servi*, and the *Bordarii*, were very numerous in the parts about Lynn, in the times of which we are now speaking, and long after. \* England did then so abound in slaves, and was so much *a land of slaves*, as to be able to carry on a trade in that commodity with other nations, and especially the *Irish*, whom English merchants, for a long time, abundantly supplied with that favorite article, out of their home stock, or native produce, with as little shame or remorse as they have in modern times supplied the West Indies and North America with the poor defenceless natives of illfated Africa. ‡ And yet the

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† Dyde's History of Tewksbury, 139, 40, 41. \* See Parkin.

‡ Directly opposite the Irish coast, (says *William of Malmesbury*) there is a seaport town, called *Bristol*, the inhabitants of which frequently sail into Ireland, to sell there people whom they had bought up throughout all England. They expose to sale maidens in a state of pregnancy, with whom they had made a sort of mock-marriages. There you might see with grief, fastened together by ropes, whole rows of wretched

English was then, as well as now, a christian nation, priding herself in the fond idea of the purity and pre-eminence of her goodness, faith, and piety. Alas, for poor christianity! How often hath her venerable name been profaned and prostituted on the vilest occasions, and for the basest of purposes!

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SECTION II. *Of the WITTENAGEMOTE and other courts, maxims of jurisprudence, institution of tythings, nuptial and funeral rites, sacerdotal, domestic, and other customs, among the Anglo-saxons.*

The *Wittenagemote*, or assembly of wise men, was the highest court among the Anglo-saxons, and from which our parliament seems to have originated. Bishops, judges, and thanes composed it, and it does not appear that the lower orders, or bulk of the people were there any how represented. The business of this assembly was prepared and opened by the king.—Another high court, but inferior to the former, was the *Shire-gemote*, in which much business was transacted, in the way of a modern assize. The Eolderman, or the Eorle was the president, and the domesmen, or judges, with certain *lawmen*, as they were called, formed the bench.

beings, of both sexes, of elegant forms, and in the very bloom of youth, (a sight sufficient to excite pity, even in barbarians,) daily offered for sale to the first purchaser. Accursed deed! Infamous disgrace! that men, acting in a manner which brutal instinct alone would have forbidden, should sell into slavery their relations, nay even their offspring! ”——*Life of Wolstan, bishop of Worcester*; B. ii, c. 20.—[see *Edinburgh Review*, July, 1808.]



It was held only twice in the year.—The *Hundred Court* came next, over which the Hundredary presided. Sales of estates, registering of Wills, manumission of slaves, &c. were here transacted. It was also called *Wapontake*, from the custom of always attending well armed. It was the repository of deeds and records, was held monthly, and had the jurisdiction of ten tythings.

Compensation to the injured party or his family, rather than the annoyance of the criminal, being the principle of the Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence, capital punishments were unfrequent. The chastity of maidens was protected by very severe laws; the ravisher of a nun was fined as an assassin, and the violator of a child incurred the penalty of a severe mutilation. Murder, as well as manslaughter, might be atoned for, at a stated price: every wound had its exact value; robbery was venial, and when committed on a bordering country, (although in peace) was almost deemed laudable. \*

\* Petit Andrews Hist. of Great Britain, 1. 84. Another historian informs us, that the great lords and abbots, among the Anglo-saxons, possessed a criminal jurisdiction within their territories, and could punish or protect without appeal. This power, he says, was in some measure restrained by the established administration of justice, by the courts of decennary, the hundred, and the county. In the Anglo-saxon courts, the accused was allowed to clear himself by his own oath, and the concurring oaths of his friends. These were called compurgators, and sometimes amounted to 300. The practices also of single combat, and the ordeal, were allowed in doubtful cases; and absurd as they may appear, the result was deemed complete evidence, for or against the accused, or suspected person.—The punishment of crimes was not less singular than the general proofs of guilt. A fine was the customary mode of commuting the punishment of the blackest offences; and as fines were a source of revenue, they were fixed with the nicest care, on a graduated scale, corresponding to the magnitude of the crime. Thus a wound of an inch long, under the hair, was compound-

It was in the institution of *Tythings*, or neighbourhoods, that the wisdom of the Anglo-Saxons appeared most conspicuous and admirable. Every ten families were connected together, as fellows in arms and in civil society. Each answered for the others good behavior to the magistrate, and each joined in paying the penalty which any one member might casually incur. A man who was not inrolled in these tythings was avoided by all, as a vagabond and person of bad character; nor could he hope to be admitted to a tything unless his probity was generally acknowledged. To Alfred this excellent institution is said to owe its perfection; and its effects on society must have been very great and salutary. \*

Of the customs of the ancient inhabitants of Lynn, and of the Anglo-Saxons in general, relating to *matrimony*, the following appear to have been some of the most remarkable and striking.—Every unmarried woman was supposed to have a guardian, or owner: the virgin belonged to her father, brother, uncle, or nearest male relation; the widow claimed the same protection from her husband's male relatives; the lover was obliged to buy his mistress, of her guardian, by a gift, the amount of which was settled by a law, that set a higher price on the maid, by one half, than on the relict, If unadvisedly the wooer wedded the lady without the guardian's consent, her property and goods were still the property of that guardian, and an injury offered

ed for with one shilling; a wound of the like size in the face, with two shillings; and thirty shillings was the compensation for the loss of an ear; and so on in proportion.—Mavor, 1. 77. \* See Andrews.

to her was to be atoned for to him, and not to the spouse. At the wedding, the guardian delivered up his ward to the husband, a friend of whom had previously avowed himself the guarantee of a proper provision for the bride in case of his death. At the feast which followed, the usual and large presents of gold, silver, arms, cloths, household stuff, &c. made by the invited friends and relations, formed the portion of the bride, who had beside, from custom immemorial, a right to ask of her mate, on the next sun-rising after her nuptials, a gift, to serve her as pin-money. As to what related to *divorces*, among these people, we meet with no particular account. In the *education* of their children, they only sought to render them dauntless, and apt for the two most important occupations of their future lives, war and the chase. It was an usual trial of a child's courage to place him on the sloping roof of a building, and if, without screaming or apparent terror, he held fast, it was deemed a favourable omen, and he was pronounced a *brave boy*.

The *burial* ceremony is said to have been much more joyous among them than that of marriage; which seems to imply something very unnatural, as well as barbarous. The house in which the body lay till its burial, was a perpetual scene of feasting, singing, dancing, and every species of riot. This, of course, was very expensive to the family of the deceased; and it was in some places carried so far, that the corpse was forcibly kept unburied by the visiting friends, till they were certain that they had consumed, in games and frantic festivity, all the



wealth the deceased had left behind him.—Nothing can well exceed the barbarism and brutishness of such a custom: and yet it seems to have long continued in some parts of this island after the introduction of christianity, and even of protestantism. Nay, some remains of it are known to have existed in some places within the memory of some of the present inhabitants. It is surprizing how tenacious mankind often are of their ancient customs, be they ever so vile, unseemly, or heathenish. Heathenish, certainly, or of pagan origin, must this most odious practice have been: but it is not the only English custom that comes under that description. The *Waites*, that usually go about before christmas, may be considered as of the self-same origin, and belonged, in all likelihood, to a certain pagan, riotous, and lawless feast, celebrated at that time of the year: the precursor and prototype of our principal christian festival. The ushering in of May with the *blowing of horns*, a custom now almost, if not altogether *peculiar to Lynn*, seems evidently to be of the same class. It is still most tenaciously kept up in this town, by the boys and children, though nobody pretends to know either its meaning or its origin. But as May-Day is known to have been one of the highest and most notable days of the year among our heathen ancestors, the said custom may very safely be concluded to have originated with them; especially as that day does not appear to have ever been very much thought of by the papists.

A notable custom among the Anglo-Saxon christians of the eighth century, and from which Lynn cannot be

supposed exempted, was that of the *Clergy* usually celebrating Mass, or administering the Sacrament *without Shoes and Stockings*, and with chalices made of horn: which seems to shew, that they had not then arrived at that sacerdotal pride and pomp, at least in regard to their dress, which became so prevalent among those of their order in latter times, when they thought proper to assume a consequence so far above the other orders of the community.

In private life the Anglo-Saxons are said to have been devout to the extreme of credulity, and hospitable to drunken extravagance. Their manners were rough, but social; their tables were plainly, but plentifully served. Large joints of roasted meat seem to have had the preference; salted victuals also were much in use. At table, the rank of the guests was strictly observed; and, by the laws of Canute, a person sitting above his proper station was to be pelted out of his place with bones, at the discretion of the company, without the privilege of taking offence. The lady, (or, as the Saxons named her, *leaf-dien*, the bread giver) sat, as now, at the upper end of the table, and distributed the provisions to her guests. The liquors used at genteel tables were wine, ale, and spiced ale, pigment (a composition of wine, spice, and honey,) morat, (honey diluted with mulberry juice) and mead. \* Such, as may reasonably be concluded, was the state of things with regard to these matters, in the best of the families of Lynn at those times.

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\* Dr. Henry, and Petit Andrews.

SECTION III. *State of learning, and of the medical profession, among the Anglo-Saxons.*

Learning during the time now alluded to was at a very low ebb in this Country “Among the various discouragements, (says *Andrews*) which literature was obliged to encounter in this ill-fated period may be reckoned the extreme scarcity of materials for writing.” A strong proof of which (he adds) is that many of the MSS. of the 10th and 11th centuries are written on parchment, from which older works (perhaps the *Decades of Livy*) have been erased.” It was for want of parchment to draw the deeds upon, (as he supposes,) that estates were then frequently conveyed from one family to another by the ceremony of a turf and a stone, delivered before witnesses, without any written agreement. However that was, England even in those dark times, exhibited some rays of intellectual light, and produced some literary characters that would have done honour to more enlightened ages. *Bede*, in particular, styled *the Venerable*, who flourished in the 8th century, and has been called, *the wise Saxon*, is believed to have comprised, in eight folio volumes, the whole body of knowledge that his age afforded. To him may be added *Egbert*, arch-bishop of York, and his pupil *Alcuin*, both distinguished in their day for extraordinary literary attainments, *Alfred* and his learned associates appeared in the 9th century, and were the ornaments of that dark age; but the light which they exhibited was not lasting, and they left no successors that were any way worthy of them. In the 10th (and most part of the 11th) century, scarce any man of literature appeared



among the English. *Elfric* is said to have been by far the most remarkable and eminent. He was styled *the grammarian*, from his having written a latin grammar. Two volumes of homilies, in MS. translated by him from the latin into the Saxon language, are said to be still extant. Very few beside have in any degree contributed to illuminate the gloom of that dismal period. *Gerbert*, however, who, from a low origin, was advanced to the papal chair in 999, under the name of *Silvester II.* deserves to be respectfully noticed, as it is to his experience, gained by travel, and a long residence among foreign nations, that our arithmetic is said to owe the use of the Saracen numerals.—But as none of these persons appear to have sprung from Lynn, or its vicinity, no further notice can properly be taken of them in this work; and what has been already said of them and other extraneous matters, was chiefly intended for the purpose of pointing out the probable state of things at Lynn in the meantime, for want of more suitable and appropriate materials.

PHYSIC and SURGERY, during those early ages, were in a most wretched state in this country, and, of course, among the inhabitants of Lynn. Old women were then the chief professors of the medical art; and as they mingled charms and spells with their prescriptions, the patient's fancy sometimes effected, or, at least, assisted in effecting the cure. As christianity gained ground, the clergy, having much time on their hands, applied themselves to the study of medicine, but made so little progress, that for a long time, *Holy Water* seems to

have been the prescription to which they chiefly trusted. If holy water were still in use, as a popular, fashionable, or favourite medical prescription, instead of the innumerable patent medicines, and other vile quackeries that now disgrace this illfated country, it had been better, no doubt, for the health and constitutions of myriads of our unwary and credulous fellow-subjects. There seems, however, but little prospect of an end to this great and growing evil, while quackery continues to be so convenient and gainful to the state, or to contribute so largely, as it now does, to the revenue of the kingdom. But it is not the only public evil, the prospect of whose extinction appears very distant and hopeless.

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SECTION IV. *Expressive and remarkable names of the months—state of the coinage, or currency—general value of different commodities in this country before the conquest—slavery—comparison with the present course of things.*

The inhabitants of Lynn and the rest of their countrymen, in the Anglo-saxon ages, could give more satisfactory reasons, it seems, for the names of their months, than we can for those of ours. December, which with them stood first, was called *Midwinter-monath*, the midwinter month. January, was denominated *Aefter-yula*, that is, after christmas, or rather, after the feast called Yula, a pagan, riotous, lawless festival, observed

at that time of the year, and to which our christmas succeeded, with no small resemblance. February, they called *Sol-monath*, the sun month, from the returning of the sun at that season. March, they named *Rhede*, or *Reth-monath*, the rough, or rugged month. April's name was *Easter-monath*, from a favourite Saxon goddess, whose festival was kept at that time, and may be said to be still kept by us, under the idea of the christian passover, which we seem to have dedicated to that same pagan goddess, by our continuing to preserve her precious memory, and celebrating the feast still in her name. May was called *Trimilchi*, from the cows being then milked three times in the day. June's name was *Sere-monath*, the dry month. July was called *Mæd-monath*, the mead month, from the meads being then in their bloom and beauty, or the people being there employed in hay making. August had the name of *Weod-monath*, the weed month, from the luxuriance, or abundance of weeds at that time. September was named *Hærfest-monath*, or the harvest month. October bore the name of *Winter-fyllith*, or winterfall, from winter approaching with the full moon of that month. November, their last month, they called *Blot-monath*, blood month, from the blood of the cattle then slain and stored for winter provision.

The Anglo-saxons are said to have made use of coins as early as the reign of Ethelbright, or Ethelbert, who governed Kent from 561 to 616; as the fines ordered in his laws are all estimated by shillings, which was even then a denomination of money. The money-pound of



the Anglo-saxons, is thought to have been the same with the Tower-pound long in use at the mint, and to have weighed less than the Troy-pound by  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a Troy-ounce. Its value was about 2*l.* 16*s.* 3*d.* of modern money. \* The *Mark*, like the Pound an imaginary coin, weighed eight ounces, or two thirds of the Pound. The merchant reckoned 12 ounces to the mark. Its value was 1*l.* 17*s.* 9*d.* The *Mancus*, a real coin, was valued at the 8th. of a mark, or 4*s.* and 8*d.* The Shilling, a real coin, was worth about eleven pence farthing of our money. The Anglo-saxon penny, (*pening*, or *sceata*,) was a silver coin, and weighed near three-pence of our money. This little piece would do more in those times for its owner, than some shillings would do now. Halflings and Feorthlings, were the half, and the fourth, or quarter of the Anglo-saxon penny, and were of silver. To these may be added a small brass coin called *Styc*. Beside these coins, it was usual with the Anglo-saxons to complete the sum destined for any particular purpose, by adding what they called *live money*, such as oxen, sheep, horses, or *slaves*; ‡ which last species of traffick was carried to an almost incredible height of brutality.

\* Dr. Henry—Petit Andrews.—Another modern historian informs us that the Saxon pound, as likewise that which was coined for some centuries after the conquest, was near three times the weight of our present money. There was (as he says) forty eight shillings in the pound, and a Saxon shilling was nearly a fifth heavier than ours. Dr. Mavor's Hist Engl. 1. 78.

‡ The princess *Githa*. daughter, or near relation to king Canute, and wife of Earl Goodwin, is said to have made a vast fortune by dealing in slaves; a traffic which then shockingly disgraced this country, as indeed it has done in our own time. *Bristol* was then, what *Liverpool* has recently been, the chief port to cherish and carry on this detestable commerce. This northern coast also, from Scotland to the Humber, was distinguished on the same account. We are told, by William of Malms-

The value or price of cattle, land, and other commodities, in the times of which we are now speaking, amounted to but a very small portion of what they now fetch. “By the laws of Athelstan, (says Dr. Mavor) a sheep was valued at a shilling, or fifteen-pence of our money: an ox was computed at six times the value of a sheep, and a cow at four. A horse was valued at thirty shillings of our money, and a mare at twenty-four. Between the years 900 and 1000, a hide of land was purchased for about one hundred and eighteen shillings, which was little more than a shilling per acre. \* On the

bury, that the Northumbrians used to sell their nearest relations for their own advantage; and Dr. Henry says, that English Slaves were then, like cattle, exposed to sale in all the markets of Europe. Many of the Slave-merchants of that period were *Jews*, who found a good market for their *english and christian Slaves* among the Saracens in Spain and *Africa*. At Rome also, we read of english slaves being exposed for sale, as early as the 7th century. It is, moreover, highly probable that Lynn and other neighbouring ports were long concerned in the same odious employment. Even as late as the reign of king *John*, the Irish used to import many slaves from Bristol. To add to the brutality of this vile proceeding, the Sellers always took care that the females should be in a condition which might enable them to demand a higher price from the purchasers. What put an end, at last, to this horrid traffick, is said to have been, not the virtue of the English, but the compunction of the Irish, who were shocked at it, under the idea that certain national misfortunes which had befallen them were divine judgments, for having been concerned in so iniquitous a business—Our unfeeling advocates for the slave trade, who have so long dishonoured this nation, and are still in no small numbers among us, are little aware, that time was, when their own ancestors were in a similar situation with the present inhabitants of Africa; being liable, like them, to be bought and sold into slavery; and that other nations actually traded here for Slaves, as we have so long done in modern times to the coast of *Guinea*.—If they cannot put themselves in the place of the poor negroes, and feel for them, they ought, at least, to do so in regard to their own ancestors, and so learn some degree of justice and humanity, if nothing else can teach them.

\* He might have said, *somewhat less* than a shilling an acre, if, as some have asserted, the hide comprehended 120 acres.

whole, (he adds) when we combine the alteration in the weight of the pound, and the modern value of the precious metals from their greater plenty, we may conceive every sum of money mentioned by historians, during the Anglo-Saxon, and even the Norman times, as if it were multiplied more than a hundred-fold above a sum of the same denomination at present.

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SECTION V. *Probability that Lynn was formerly concerned in the exportation of slaves--comparison between the ancient and modern English slave-dealers--slaves and horses the chief exports of this country in those days--corn not then exported, though it had been formerly--imports--commerce--miscellaneous hints and observations.*

Considering how very fruitful in slaves England appears to have been under the Anglo-saxons, and how commonly they bought and sold their slaves, (and even their own kindred,) and that they were actually a principal article of their exports to other countries, ‡ it is more than probable that Lynn and other Nortfolk ports were then deeply concerned in that traffic.—Slaves are known to have then abounded in the parts about this town; and no other commodity, or produce of the country, was more marketable, or saleable, both at home and abroad; we may therefore be sure that the merchants and

‡ Henry iv. 237, 8, 9.



opulent people of Lynn were not inattentive to so fashionable and profitable a branch of commerce. Some indeed, even then, disapproved of it, and a bishop, of the name of *Wolfstan*, is said to have firmly set his face against it at Bristol, and to have made the people somewhat ashamed of their proceedings; but it does not appear that they relinquished it, for Bristol continued to be the chief English mart for slaves, long after his time. His conduct, however, was highly laudable, memorable, and exemplary; but where among our modern prelates, can we find one that has virtue or fortitude enough to imitate the noble example of *Wolfstan*!

How vile and mercenary must the character of those ancient English dealers in human flesh appear, when we contemplate them as selling their own countrymen and neighbours, and even their kindred! It reminds us of what has often been said of the modern commercial, or mercantile character: that a merchant would sell his own father, if he could do it safely and gainfully.—Between our ancient and modern English slave dealers, there is some dissimilarity, though they both acted from the same principle, and the conduct of each appears thoroughly unjustifiable and atrocious.—The latter dealt only in strangers, at a great distance, and of another colour; but the former trafficked, as was before observed, in their own countrymen, and near neighbours, brought up among them, and, occasionally, even in their own near relations. Of the two, therefore, the conduct of the ancients appears, at first sight, as far the most un-

natural and shocking; but that will cease to be the case, upon further consideration, and when times and circumstances are duly attended to. Those ancients lived in rude and barbarous ages, when the natural rights of man were not understood, and when darkness visible was every where predominant; which must, in some measure, extenuate their misdeeds. But our modern slave-dealers have carried on their operations in the open day, and in the very face of the sun—they have adhered to this most barbarous and savage traffick in the most enlightened age of the world—they have persisted in it, in spite of the frequent and solemn remonstrances of the most virtuous and enlightened of their countrymen, and in defiance of the clearest demonstrations of the flagitiousness of their conduct. They have, therefore, no cloak for their sin, no excuse or palliating plea for their atrocities. To them belongs the preeminence of turpitude and infamy, and they may be said to stand at the head of those monsters who have been a disgrace to christianity, to humanity, and to their country.

*Slaves and horses* appear to have been the principal, if not the only articles exported from this country during the Anglo-Saxon ages. Corn constituted then no article of our exports, though it had done so formerly, in a considerable degree, while Britain formed a part of the Roman Empire. Agriculture must therefore have miserably declined here since the arrival of the Saxons, and the country had no reason to congratulate itself on its change of masters. After the introduction of christianity the monks are said to have been, by much

the best husbandmen, and also the best, if not the only gardeners in the country. They were certainly the most enlightened class of the community, and the little knowledge and learning which the country then possessed were chiefly, if not entirely, confined within the solemn precincts of the monasteries.

Of our *imports* in those days, *books, relics, pictures, and images of saints, clerical vestments, and church ornaments*, are said to have been the chief articles; which gives but a very miserable idea of the state of the country, and its commerce, in the mean time.—They were however, not the only articles, for it appears that *wines* also were imported from France and Spain, *cloths* from Germany and Flanders, *furs, deer-skins*, (and probably, *bear-skins*,) *ropes, whale oil, &c.* from Scandinavia: and even a portion of all the different commodities then known in any part of Europe is supposed to have been at that period imported to this country. Yet the balance of trade is said to have been much in our favour—that is, we got much more by the sale of our *Slaves* and *horses*, in which our exports consisted, than what we lost or laid out in the purchase of all the various articles which we imported, many of which, at the same time, must have been pretty expensive. This seems to imply, that those *Slaves* and *horses*, with which foreign markets were supplied from hence, must have been very numerous, as well as very beneficial and lucrative to our English merchants.

During some part of this period the shipping of Eng-



land seems to have been pretty numerous; but what portion of it belonged to the port of Lynn does not appear. The royal navy too, was at times on a respectable footing, particularly in the reigns of Alfred and Canute, as well as in those of Edgar, surnamed the peaceable, and Ethelred: the latter is said to have possessed near 800 sail of men of war, † but they were all what would now be called small vessels. The military force of the kingdom consisted generally of about 50,000, though on extraordinary occasions it considerably exceeded that number.

For a long time, *markets* were usually kept on *Sundays*, in or near some *church*, but that being found somewhat inconvenient, as interfering with the religious service of the day, they were afterwards changed to Saturdays. The *fairs* of those times were also generally kept within the precincts of some great churches, or monasteries, on some notable day, generally the anniversary of the patron saint, and it was customary to oblige every comer to the fair, at the gate, before he entered, to *swear* that he would neither *lie*, *steal*, nor *cheat*: which might be very useful, if the people had then a proper sense of the sacredness of oaths, otherwise it would be of but little avail, as it is to be feared it would also be in the present day, when, from the multiplicity or commonness of oaths, a disposition to trifle with, or make light of them is notoriously prevalent. For holding these fairs, bishops and abbots obtained charters from the crown, with a view to increase their own revenues

† Henry iv. 234.

by the tolls which such charters would authorise them to levy on such occasions. Thus every thing contributed to the aggrandizement of the church. Before the end of this period, the clergy had possession of more than a third part of all the land in the kingdom, with the tithes of all the rest.

Much attention was then bestowed on the decoration of churches and religious houses. Organs and bells were introduced toward the latter part of this period. The famous *Saint Dunstan* gave a fine organ, in the reign of Edgar, to the abbey of Glastonbury. Bells became very common about the 10th century, and were hung in the towers of churches, which were then all of wood: only the altars were, it seems, built of stone. The first set of bells in this kingdom, that we hear of, was at *Croyland*, in Lincolnshire, in the reign of Athelstan, a gift of the abbot *Turketul* to that celebrated monastery. \* There had, however, been *single* bells in England long before that period, and even as early as the 7th century, as is attested by *Bede*. In the time of M. Paris, bells were not allowed to ring at funerals, as inspiring too gay and unsuitable ideas. Clocks also began to be introduced here toward the close of this

\* As a proof of the salubrity of Croyland, and the temperance of its monks in those days, it has been remarked, that when *Turketul*, who had been chancellor of England, and one of the greatest warriors and statesmen of his time, retired from the world, and became abbot of Croyland, he found five aged monks there, to whom he paid particular attention. The eldest of them died in 973, in his 169th. year: the second died within the same year, at the age of 142: the third died the next year, aged 115; the other two are thought to have been about the same age as the last. Their names were *Clarenbald*, *Swarling*, *Turgar*, *Brune*, and *Ajo*.—Croyland is not now remarkable for its salubrity, or the longevity of its inhabitants.

period. About the same time, the English began to be expert and noted manufacturers of woollen cloth; the value of a sheep's fleece, of course, was then well understood, and rated at two fifths of the animal's whole price. Silk, though now beginning to be imported, was not woven here until some centuries afterwards: linen, in the mean time, was extremely scarce. It is very remarkable, but seemingly an unquestionable fact, that highly finished works in gold and silver, were the production even of our darkest ages. The monks, in those times, were the best artists, and the famous St. Dunstan inferior to none of them. Yet the means of supplying life with necessaries, appear to have been but imperfectly known and cultivated. The pagans of Sussex, in the 7th. century, though starving for want of food, knew not how to catch any fish, except eels, until bishop Wilfred, who came thither in 678, instructed them in the use of nets. He took 300 at a draught; and by thus supplying their bodily wants, rendered their minds tractable to his doctrines, and easily succeeded in their conversion.— \* Our modern missionaries to the south sea isles, and other foreign parts, would do well to imitate his example, and not confine their attention or labours solely to religious instruction. A goodly pattern of the same kind has also been very lately set before them among the North American Indians by the *Quaker missionaries*. But it is to be feared that they and their employers are too wise in their own eyes to profit by such examples.

\* Andrews——Mavor——Henry,



SECTION VI. *Population of Lynn, and the country in general, before the conquest—condition of the bulk of the inhabitants in the mean time—sufferings of the inhabitants of Lynn and the adjacent country from the Danes—intrepid and ferocious character of that people—instruments of vengeance on the Anglo-Saxons—their disposition and character not much changed by their conversion to christianity—remarkable instances of imposition, superstition, and credulity.*

Of the population of Lynn, at any time during that long period, from the establishment of the Saxons to that of the Normans, no estimate can now be formed; but it is pretty certain that the major part of its inhabitants, as well as those of the adjacent country, and of all the rest of England, were *Slaves*, during the whole of that time, and long after. Those unfortunate people, for the most part at least, appear to have been the descendants of the original inhabitants, who were reduced to that condition, at the subjugation, or conquest of the country, and whose lives had been then spared, on condition of their becoming the property, or goods and chattels of the conquerors. So did the Saxons treat those of the natives whose lives they condescended to spare; all the rest they butchered without mercy, except such of them as were fortunate enough to escape to the unsubdued parts of the island. Of these cruel and horrid deeds, they never appear to have repented, even after they assumed the name of christians, for the bondage still continued; but, in time, a severe retaliation took place, and the Saxons, in their turn, were treated much after the same manner as they had formerly treated the Britons. Long peace had

destroyed their martial spirit: from a very warlike people, they became gradually a most dastardly race, and so fell an easy prey to the ferocious Danes. The difference at that time between these two nations in point of military prowess, is said to be so great that the Saxons, alias the English, frequently fled before inferior numbers of the Danes, and could hardly be prevailed upon to meet them in the field of battle on any terms. "Oh the misery and worldly shame in which England is involved through the wrath of God! (said an English bishop in the reign of Ethelred the unready) How often doth two or three troops of Danes drive the whole English army before them from sea to sea, to our eternal infamy, if we were capable of feeling shame! But, alas! so abject are we become, that we worship those who trample upon us, and load us with indignities." Such was then the abject submission of the English to the insolence of the Danes, "that when an Englishman met a Dane on a bridge, or in a narrow path, where he could not avoid him, he was obliged to stand still, with his head uncovered, and in a bowing posture, till he was out of sight." Nay, we are assured that English submission and Danish insolence and brutality were sometimes carried still further, and even to degrees that are almost incredible, as well as too indelicate to relate. \* These Danes, who now became the instruments of retaliation and vengeance upon the Anglo-Saxons, were remarkable for their extraordinary military skill and intrepidity; and they were as unfeeling and ferocious as the latter appear to have been at the time when they invaded and

\* Henry iv. 313.

conquered this country: they were therefore probably the fitter for the execution of the work in which they were employed. Much has been said of the cruelties committed by the Danes in this country: they were certainly very enormous and shocking; but there is no reason to conclude that they exceeded, or, perhaps, even equalled those which the Saxons had before exercised upon the former inhabitants. Of all the perpetrators of Danish enormities, in this island, *Guthrum* seems to be the foremost, or most conspicuous, in the pages of our ancient historians. Of him one of them speaks thus—“The cruel Guthrum arrived in England A. D. 878, at the head of an army of Pagan Danes, no less cruel than himself; who, like inhuman savages, destroyed all before them with fire and sword, involving cities, towns, and villages, with their inhabitants, in devouring flames; and cutting those in pieces with their battle-axes who attempted to escape from their burning houses. The tears, cries, and lamentations of men, women, and children, made no impressions upon their unrelenting hearts; even the most tempting bribes, and the humblest offers of becoming their slaves, had no effect. All the towns through which they passed exhibited the most deplorable scenes of misery and desolation; as, venerable old men lying with their throats cut before their own doors; the streets covered with the bodies of young men and children, without heads, legs, or arms; and of matrons and virgins, who had been first publicly dishonoured, and then put to death.” \* This is very shock-

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\* I. Walingford, apud Gale, t. 1. p. 336: quoted by Henry 4. 324



ing, and looks like providential retaliation. The annals of history exhibit many instances of the same kind. The Danish warriors were always prodigal of life, and not only did not fear, but even courted a violent death. A natural death they dreaded, as a most ignoble and disgraceful end, and which they always appeared very anxious to avoid. No wonder that they became the terror of every nation against which they happened to wage war. No greater evil could well befall any people than to have them for their enemies and invaders.

To no part of this island did the Danes prove a greater, or more terrible scourge than to the province of the East Angles, which became one of their principal settlements, and where they committed the most shocking barbarities. Hence we may very safely conclude that the sufferings which the inhabitants of Lynn experienced from them must have been exceedingly grievous and deplorable. But as those sufferings have not been recorded they cannot now be described or particularized,

The Danes, as well as the Anglo-Saxons, when they invaded this country were pagans. Both of them afterward took up the profession of christianity; but it was only its profession, or bare name that they did take up. Their former ferocity still remained. They continued grossly ignorant, superstitious, and heathenish, and exhibited scarcely a spark of the real spirit of the religion of Christ, except perhaps in the latter part of the reign of Alfred. Their ghostly, or religious instructors were miserable and blind guides, or knavish and art-

ful impostors, who taught them that the most meritorious actions consisted in erecting and endowing monasteries, performing pilgrimages, and reverencing the priesthood. From such pretended or pseudo-christianity, what good effect could be expected? Grapes cannot be gathered of thorns, or figs of thistles.—When Earl Alwine, who was the greatest and richest man in England, in the reign of Edgar the peaceable, consulted St. Oswald, bishop of York, what he should do to obtain the pardon of his sins, the *sainted* prelate made him the following eloquent harangue: “I beseech your excellency to believe that those holy men who have retired from the world, and spend their days in poverty and prayer, are the greatest favourites of heaven, and the greatest blessings to the world. It is by their merits that the divine judgements are averted and changed; that plagues and famines are removed; that healthful seasons and plentiful harvests are procured; that states and kingdoms are governed; that prisons are opened, captives delivered, shipwrecks prevented, the weak strengthened, and the sick healed: that I may say all in one word, it is by their merits that this world, so full of wickedness, is preserved from immediate ruin and destruction. I intreat you therefore, my dear son, if you have any place in your estate fit for that purpose; that you immediately build a monastery, and fill it with holy monks, whose prayers will supply all your defects, and expiate all your crimes.” The Apostles, no doubt, would have answered such an inquiry very differently. The building of Ramsey abbey, however, as Dr. Henry

observes, was the consequence of this fine speech. \* Such acts were represented by the monks as contributing greatly to the future repose of those who did them, and of their friends; whence it was usual for all those who had any sense of religion, or concern for their salvation, to bequeath some part of their estates *to their own souls*, as they called those bequests which they made to a church or a monastery.

To promote and establish an unbounded veneration for the priesthood, miraculous tales were industriously propagated, and as readily believed; for the credulity of the people perfectly suited the knavery of the priests. The following tale, or rather miracle, is related by William of Malm'sbury, in the very words, as he says, of one of the persons on whom it was wrought: "I Ethelbert, a sinner, will give a true relation of what happened to me on the day before christmas, A. D. 1012, in a certain village, where there was a church dedicated to St Magnus the martyr, that all men may know the *danger of disobeying the commands of a priest*. Fifteen young women and eighteen young men, of which I was one, were dancing and singing in the church-yard, when one Robert, a priest, was performing mass in the church; who sent us a civil message, intreating us to desist from our diversion, because we disturbed his devotion by our noise. But we impiously disregarded his request; upon which the holy man, inflamed with anger, prayed to God and St. Magnus, that we might continue dancing and singing a whole year, without intermission. His

\* Henry iv. 299.



prayers were heard. A young man, the son of a priest, named John, took his sister, (who was singing with us) by the hand, and her arm dropped from her body without one drop of blood following. But notwithstanding this disaster she continued to dance and sing with us a whole year. During all that time we felt no inconvenience from rain, cold, heat, hunger, thirst, or weariness; and neither our shoes, nor our clothes wore out. Whenever it began to rain, a magnificent house was erected over us, by the power of the Almighty. By our continual dancing we wore the earth so much, that by degrees we sunk into it up to the knees, and at length up to the middle. When the year was ended, bishop Hubert came to the place, dissolved the invisible ties by which our hands had been so long united, absolved us, and reconciled us to St. Magnus. The priest's daughter, who had lost her arm, and other two of the young women, died away immediately; but all the rest fell into a profound sleep, in which they continued three days and three nights; after which they arose and went up and down the world, publishing this true and glorious miracle, and carrying the evidence of its truth along with them, in the continual shaking of their limbs." A formal deed, attesting the truth of this ridiculous story, was drawn up and subscribed by bishop Peregrine, the successor of Hubert, A. D. 1013. † William of Malmsbury also, the most sensible of our old historians, appears to have given it full credit. In short, it seems very certain that it was long, in common with abundance of other similar tales, universally believed; which shews

† Henry, iv, 329.

how well established the authority of the priesthood, and the popular reverence for that order, must then have been in this country, and here at Lynn, as well as in other places.

Next to the priests and monks, the magicians and fortunetellers appear to have then possessed the largest share of the public confidence and veneration; and very probably with equal worthiness. Strange tales have been related by historians of the ascendancy which these sorts of people long had over the infatuated inhabitants, and even over those of the highest orders among them. These things give but an unfavourable idea of our national character in those times. It would but ill become us, however, to think very contemptuously of those foibles in our poor ancestors, while we ourselves with all our boasted advantages and wisdom, have not yet entirely left off consulting fortunetellers and conjurers: to say nothing of the multitude of other impostors, of different sorts, that are daily countenanced and caressed among us.

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SECTION VII. *Of the Heptarchy and its history—remarks on Egbert, Alfred, and their most renowned successors—character of Canute, and of Edward the Confessor: the latter the first of our monarchs that touched for the Evil—remarks on that circumstance, and on the prevalence of that complaint in the parts about Lynn.*

During a good part of the period from the Saxon invasion to the conquest, England was divided into seven

petty states, or kingdoms, usually denominated, the Heptarchy, \* the history of which is exceedingly uninteresting: being, as Granger observes, a series of violence, wars, and massacres, among petty tyrants, most of whom were a disgrace to the human species. — Under the famous Egbert those states were consolidated, and formed into one kingdom, under the name of England, which it has borne ever since. The kings who have ruled it, from Egbert to the Norman conqueror, were, for the most part, like their predecessors in the days of the heptarchy, very disreputable and worthless characters. There were however, some exceptions, among which Alfred was far the most conspicuous, and outshone the rest, as the sun does all the other luminaries.

Among the most renowned and respectable of the other English sovereigns of that period, beside Egbert, already mentioned, were Edward the elder, Athelstan, Edgar the peaceable, Edmund ironside, Canute the great, and Harold the second. Of Edgar we are told, that he styled himself *King of Great Britain*, as Edred, it seems, had done before him; but that title was afterward discontinued, and not used by any succeeding monarch, till the reign of James the first. The most potent among these crowned heads was Canute, being the sovereign of Denmark and Norway as well as of England. That he possessed great talents is allowed on all hands; and though he was cruel here at first, he gradually became mild, devout, and popular. Though an usurper and

\* *Seven*, however, was not invariably their number, they were sometimes more and sometimes less.



a foreigner, he was, perhaps, next to Alfred, the wisest of our ancient kings, if not also the most virtuous and enlightened, especially towards the close of his reign: of which his memorable adventure, or experiment with the tide, and with the miserable sycophants of his court, on the sea-shore, seems a pretty strong indication. That he was also superstitious, and an admirer of relics, must not be denied: but it was likewise the case with all the most eminent of the princes of those days, the great Alfred himself not excepted. There is a remarkable air of honest simplicity in the reason given by Canute for undertaking a voyage, or journey to Rome, which he did a few years before he died:—"I had been told (said he) that the apostle Peter had received great authority from the Lord, and carried the keys of heaven: therefore I thought it absolutely necessary to secure his favour by a pilgrimage to Rome."—How many of our modern visionaries and devotees would appear more respectable than Canute, were they as honestly to avow their motives, or give the reason of their proceedings?

In adverting to the princes, or sovereigns of this period, to whom the town of Lynn was in subjection, Edward, called the Confessor, must not be left unnoticed: not so much for any shining qualities, or great respectability of character which he possessed, for there he appears to have been very deficient, as for certain incidents or events which distinguished his reign, independent of any personal worth or merit of his own. With the monks and ecclesiastics he was certainly a great favourite, but what made him so redounded not at all to his honour,

but may be said to be a disgrace, rather than any credit to his memory.

The most important and laudable occurrence of his reign was the reformation of the law of the land. Before his time different parts of the kingdom were governed by different laws: Wessex, by the West Saxon; Mercia, by the Mercian; and Northumberland, by the Danish laws. In his reign they were reduced into one body, by the name of the laws of Edward the confessor, which then became common to all England. This together with the abolition of that odious tax called *Dane-gelt*, seem to have been his best and most commendable deeds, though probably to be ascribed to his counsellors, such as Goodwin, Leofric, and Siward, rather than to himself. It is said, however, that he was humane, temperate, and charitable, and gave much alms: and, moreover, that he had visions and revelations, the gift of prophecy, and even that of working miracles, his extensive fame for which continued long, and procured him, about two hundred years after his death, from pope Alexander III. the high honour of canonization, under the name of *Saint Edward the Confessor*, an appellation that must have been very oddly and unaccountably applied.

But of all his memorable achievements, or traits of character, his *touching* for the Evil, or Scrofula, and pretending to the gift or power of miraculously healing that complaint, are the most remarkable. As this pretended gift or power is supposed to have originated

with him, \* and to have descended from him to all his legitimate successors on the English throne, a sketch of the history of the practice, from first to last, it is presumed, would not prove unacceptable or unenterprising to the reader. And as the disorder, for whose cure this practice was introduced, is said to be nowhere more common, or prevalent, than at and about Lynn, † which is supposed to have been also the case for many generations, it may naturally and safely be concluded that frequent applications to the throne for a cure would be made, time after time, from these parts, while every body believed that the sovereign's *touch* would infallibly remove the malady. Myriads and myriads, labouring under scrofulous complaints, have certainly applied to the throne for relief during the long interval between the time of the Confessor, when the said practice commenced, and the accession of George I. when it was finally laid aside. Even in the single reign of that *most religious* prince (as he has been called) Charles II. the number, it is said, amounted to *above ninety thousand*; and it is morally certain that not a few of that multitude, and of the rest, who resorted, before and since, to our different sovereigns, for relief in the same case, were Norfolk and Lynn patients. The insertion therefore, in this volume, of the proposed Sketch of

\* Some, indeed, have seemed rather to doubt, if its origin here was as early as the days of Edward, as Ingulphus, a contemporary writer, makes no mention of it. Malmsbury, however, who lived not long after, affirms it; and the Confessor seems as likely as any to have taken the lead in such a business and become our first practitioner.

† Owing partly, as it is supposed, to the aguishness of the air, and partly to other causes, not peculiar to these parts.



this notable affair, or practice of the royal touch, cannot, it is presumed, be deemed any material deviation from propriety:—so it shall appear in the last section of this chapter, at the conclusion of this second part of the work.

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SECTION VIII. *State of Lynn in the Confessor's time—Stigand, Ailmer, and Harold, bore then the chief sway—great power of the latter—sketch of his character—obtains the crown at the confessor's death—is soon disturbed by two formidable invasions—the one from the Danish, or Norwegian shores, under Hal fagar, whom he vanquishes and slays in battle—the other from France, under his rival or competitor, William of Normandy, in opposing whom he is himself vanquished and slain in the decisive battle of Hastings, which places the conqueror on the throne, without further struggle, through the defection and machinations of the bishops and clergy.*

In the time of the Confessor, as he has been already suggested, Lynn was a place of considerable and growing consequence. The town then, and the adjacent country belonged to three of the principal men of the realm. Harold, who afterwards ascended the throne, was then Earl, or Duke of the East Angles, \* which must have placed Lynn under his jurisdiction. He had

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\* He was also Duke of Wessex, and Earl or Governor of Sussex, Surrey, Kent, and Essex.

besides, great possessions here, being chief proprietor and lord of South Lynn and other places. Great Massingham, Westacre &c. did also belong to him. Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, likewise bore then no small sway in this town and neighbourhood, as lord of Rising, &c. So also did his brother Ailmer, bishop of Elnham, to which see, even at that early period, the government of the borough of Lynn seems to have been a kind of appendage. These two prelates were Anglo-saxons, which was the case, it seems, with but three more of the order in the kingdom; \* the rest being all foreigners, and mostly French, or Normans. These being his countrymen, and in a manner his subjects, we need not wonder at the facility with which the Conqueror obtained the English Crown; especially as the Pope also patronized the undertaking. Though those bishops could not prevent the accession of Harold, owing to his great popularity and power, yet they kept themselves ready to promote the cause and interest of his rival whenever a fair opportunity should offer, and it was not long before they had their wishes completely gratified.

Harold during the latter part of the Confessor's reign was the most powerful subject in the kingdom. He possessed also great talents and courage, with no small share of ambition, and had acquired vast and unrivalled popularity. It was therefore no great wonder that he should pretty easily make his way to the throne at the very first vacancy. He had had for sometime the chief management of public affairs, and his conduct in

\* Carte 1. 416.

the mean while appears to have given general satisfaction. No one in the kingdom was better qualified, or perhaps more deserving than he to wear the crown; and whatever the Norman, or monkish historians may have said to the contrary, it seems pretty certain that he ascended the throne with the general assent and approbation of the people.

His reign however, was soon disturbed, first by a Danish, or Norwegian invasion in the north, headed by Harfager, or Helfager king of Norway, aided by Harold's own worthless brother Tosti; and shortly after by a French invasion in the south, under William the bastard, Duke of Normandy. The former Harold opposed with success: the invaders were defeated with great slaughter, and the two chiefs, Harfager and Tosti, fell in the action. Great and rich booty is said to have fallen into the hands of the victors, including a considerable quantity of gold. Here Harold appears to have committed a great error, and to have departed most unwisely and unaccountably from his usual policy, by retaining all the spoil for himself, instead of sharing it with his soldiers, which excited great discontents among them, and proved afterwards, in no small measure, detrimental to his cause.

No sooner had the English monarch triumphed over the first invaders than he learnt that the Duke of Normandy with a great army had made good his landing in Sussex. He immediately commenced his march against that fierce and formidable adversary, with an army greatly reduced by the late bloody, though suc-



cessful conflict, and rendered discontented by his own impolitic and unwise conduct, already mentioned. Yet notwithstanding those disadvantages, so rapid was his progress from Yorkshire to Sussex, that he actually arrived within sight of his enemies before they had proceeded but a little way from the place of debarkation. It had been better, no doubt, had he taken more time, to refresh and recruit his army, or acted on the defensive, for sometime at least, which could hardly have failed of being very materially to his advantage, as he was then circumstanced. But so impetuous was he, and resolute to bring the contest to a speedy termination, that he absolutely rejected the wholesome counsel given him by one of his brothers, to adopt a different course. To his opponent this must have been perfectly agreeable, and the very thing he wanted, as nothing could have been less his interest than a defensive war on the part of the English, or to find in Harold another *Fabius*. Both parties accordingly prepared for a speedy and decisive engagement. The two armies are said to have spent the preceding night very differently: the English impiously passed it in riot and revelry; but the Normans, good creatures! were all the time occupied in the duties of religion; for which, to be sure, from the nature of their errand, and the object of their visit, they must have been preeminently qualified! This story, we may presume, was fabricated afterwards by the monks and priests and Norman historians, who were in the interest of the Conqueror, and wished to pay their court to the reigning family. Be that as it might, the battle of Hastings forms a memorable era in the history of this

country. Both armies fought with desperate valour, as if determined to conquer or die; but the invaders proved victorious. Harold and his two brothers, with the flower of the English army, fell in that bloody and fatal field; and that single victory may be said to have placed the conqueror on the throne of England, and advanced him to the first rank among the European potentates of that age. In promptness, decision, military and political talents, as well as good fortune, he may be said strongly to resemble the present sovereign of Normandy and the French Empire. But it is to be hoped that the resemblance will not hold, in case the latter should ever attempt to accomplish his long threatened invasion of this kingdom.

From the disastrous and fatal field of Hastings, Edwin and Morcar, the principal surviving English commanders, with the shattered remains of Harold's army, retreated in the night to London, where they convened the people, and such of the grandees of the realm as were there to be found, to consult upon the best mode of proceeding, at so critical and desperate a conjuncture. They themselves were for placing Edgar Atheling, the next heir, on the throne, and adopting vigorous measures for the discomfiture and expulsion of the invaders; but their advice was not taken, their reasons were set at nought, and every idea of any further resistance was abandoned; so that William obtained the crown without fighting another battle, or encountering any further difficulty. Nothing could exceed the pusillanimity, or dastardly conduct of the English on that me-

morable occasion. Instead of the present prevailing and flattering idea, that one Englishman can beat two or three Frenchmen, they seemed to believe, on the contrary, that one Frenchman could beat, at least, two or three Englishmen. In short, they appear to have erred as much on the one hand as we do on the other. But it was not the only time when our dear countrymen discovered a diffidence of their own superiority.

The blame of rejecting the counsel of the two chieftains above-mentioned has been imputed to the defection and machinations of the bishops and clergy, who, as has been already suggested, were decidedly in the interest of the Norman, and, of course, inimical to the Anglo-saxon or English government, constitution, and succession. The chief reasons for which, were probably the following—1. Many of them, and most of the bishops were foreigners, and William's countrymen and subjects; so that it was natural for them to favour his enterprize and pretensions.—2. Ecclesiastical power and priestly domination were more likely to be promoted, and the popular, or opposite spirit depressed and crushed under a Norman, than an Anglo-saxon, or English government.—3. Even under the Confessor, monk-ridden and priest-ridden as he was, the civil power was so formidable, and superior to the ecclesiastical, that the parliament actually procured the deprivation and banishment of *Robert*, archbishop of Canterbury, as an incendiary and fomenter of disputes between the king and his subjects, and had *Stigand* appointed in his room: a change therefore, or such a revolution



in the constitution and government as William was likely to effect or promote, must have been a desirable object with the whole clerical body.—4. The Pope had openly appeared in favour of the invasion, the success of which he was understood to have much at heart: and so careful had he been to let all see that William was his man, and the church's favourite and champion, that he first made him a present of a consecrated standard, a golden Agnus Dei, and a ring, in which was pretended to be one of St. Peter's hairs; (of course a most precious relic;) and then he solemnly excommunicated all that should oppose him. This conduct or example of the pope would alone have been sufficient to influence and determine the bishops, clergy, and monks, or the whole body of the ecclesiastics, to betray and sacrifice the cause of the people, or of the nation, and promote to the utmost that of the invader. They would have done so without any other reason or inducement; but being further stimulated by those before mentioned, we may safely conclude that their zeal in the disgraceful cause which they had so basely espoused, must have been of no ordinary fervour.

This memorable co-operation of the clergy with the conqueror, so hostile to the liberty and independence of the country, has been pronounced, in a recent publication, to be “the true origin of the *alliance between church and state*, so much contended for by some of our ecclesiastics; who have renounced the penances of popery, but would fain retain both its pride and its pow-

er.” \* But if it was really its origin here, yet it seems to have begun elsewhere at a much earlier period: for the world does not appear to have existed a very long while before statesmen and priests found it to be their interest to play into each others hands, and enter into partnership, for the better management of their respective concerns; or, in other words, for the sake of keeping the multitude more easily and effectually in subjection.

The papal presents and interference in favour of the Norman expedition, despicable as they appear, must have largely contributed to recruit William's forces, inspire them with confidence and enthusiasm, and eventually promote and ensure his success. Nor was he himself wanting on his part. Nothing that an intrepid adventurer, and able leader could do to give effect to his undertaking was by him omitted. He even went so far as to make very liberal promises to divide the lands of the English among his followers, in case he proved victorious; which promises he afterwards very punctually and amply performed, so that the English grantees were deprived of their possessions, or if they were permitted to retain any part of them, they held the same under the Normans, who then became every where the great lords and proprietors of the country.

The whole English nation, in the meantime, was so completely subdued and degraded, as to become, like the ancient Gibeonites, mere hewers of wood and drawers of water for their haughty conquerors, whom providence seemed to employ, like the Danes before, as

\* Flower's Political Review, vol. 1. 299.

instruments of retaliation and vengeance, for the atrocities formerly committed on the original inhabitants. The english language itself was now in a manner prohibited and proscribed, and the *French* substituted for it, or introduced in its room, especially in the courts of law, and all legal transactions, which continued to be the case for a long time. \* French also became now the sole language of gentlemen, or of all who moved in the high and polite circles. None could be admitted into such circles, or allowed the name of gentlemen, without that language, which bore very hard, no doubt, upon many an English buck of those days; hence that well known old proverb, “ Jack would be a gentleman, but that he can talk no French.”

The changes which the Norman Conquest produced in this country shall be further noticed in the next part or division of this work, where it will be seen how Lynn in particular, and its vicinity were affected by that memorable and humiliating revolution.

During the period of which we have been treating, Lynn exhibited no appearance of a borough, or corpo-

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\* We are apt to deem it a grievous hardship upon the good people of England, under the Norman princes, to be deprived of the administration of justice in their own mother tongue, or to have their legal proceedings all transacted in a strange language, without considering, that the Welsh, the Irish, and the Scotch highlanders, are to this day used by our own government in the same manner; in which nevertheless, we seem to perceive no great or very material harm, hardship, or impropriety:——so loth do we often appear to place ourselves in the situation of our neighbours, and to use them as we would wish to be used by them.——England must have made a queerish appearance when *law* was administered in *French*, and *religion* in *Latin*, and the people knew no language but English.



rate town: that state, or order of things belonged to the policy of a subsequent period, and resulted from the revolution effected by the conquest, and the odious feudal system, for their attachment to which the Normans were so very remarkable. Of the population of Lynn before the conquest, a great part probably consisted of *slaves* of different descriptions, the vassals and property of the bishop and other great men. The artificers, tradesmen, and merchants of Lynn were then all, perhaps, in that condition, and following their respective employments or professions, by the permission, and under the protection or patronage of their lordly superiors and proprietors, and also for their, as well as their own behoof or emolument. It is not very clear or probable that the condition of these people and of the rest of their unfree or enslaved countrymen, did or could, by the conquest, suffer any very material deterioration. But with their superiors, the high and mighty, or great men of the land, their lordly and unfeeling oppressors, the case is known to have been far otherwise: that event, like some modern conquests and revolutions, degraded and humbled them with a vengeance.

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SECTION IX. *Sketch of the practice of the royal touch in England, or a historical Essay on the memorable empiricism of our English sovereigns, from Edward the Confessor to George the First.*

It is generally agreed that this notable practice, which appears to have been long deemed as a branch of the

royal prerogative, began in this kingdom with, or in the person of Edward the Confessor. \* Some however seem to think it to have existed in France at an earlier period: if so, Edward, who had long lived in that country, and appeared very partial to it, and fond of French fashions, might take the hint from thence, and introduce it here upon his accession to the throne, which he might easily manage by the help of the monks, with whom he was so great a favourite.

*Clovis*, and *Robert* of sainted memory, are named among the early French sovereigns who successfully practised the royal touch, and were greatly admired and venerated by their subjects on that account. In the reign of *Philip* the first, the virtue is supposed to have been somehow lost, but happily revived again with undiminished splendor in that of *Lewis* the fat, after which it seems to have long and regularly continued. *Francis I.* ‡ and *Henry IV.* are represented as eminent practitioners; how it was with the succeeding monarchs, descended from the latter, we are not informed. No particular attention appears to have been paid to it yet by the emperor *Napoleon*. What he may think proper to do

\* *Ailred* as well as *Malmsbury* observe, that the Confessor cured a young married woman, reduced by the Evil to a deplorable condition, by stroking the place affected with his hand; upon which she grew sensibly better, the humour dispersed, the scar wore off, and in a week's time the cure was perfected!! "—*Carte* 1. 357.

‡ That *Francis* touched for the evil is said to be averred by *Servetus*, in his 1st. edition of *Ptolemy's Geography*. Of its success, indeed, we are told that he appeared far from being a believer; but it was not the only instance of his unbelief or incredulity. He often disbelieved what others firmly credited; for which the bloody reformer *Calvin* made him pay very dearly, at last, without the gates of *Geneva*.

hereafter, no tongue can tell. Whether he possesses this power or not, it is certain that he possesses some other powers in as great a degree, at least, as any of his royal or imperial predecessors.

But this miraculous gift of healing did not, it seems, belong exclusively to the kings of France and England.

\* The Earls, or princes of the house of Hapsburg also, are reported to have had it in no scanty measure. They cured the strumous, or scrofulous, it is said, by giving them drink, and the stammerers, by kissing them. But the Kings of Hungary seem to have exceeded all; for we are told that they *could* cure, not only the king's evil, but all disorders occasioned by poison, the bite of a viper, or any other venomous animal. "Mr. *Bel*, who tells us this, observes ( what is as remarkable as the account itself ) that he cannot find in history, that these Hungarian kings ever exercised this wonderful power. † More shame for them, the unfeeling wretches ! if they possessed it.

"The case was otherwise with the royal doctors of France and England, who have not been so shy of exerting this power, or rather, of practising this quackery.

\* Nor does it appear that it belonged exclusively to certain *christian* potentates; for, long before there were any such, it had been ascribed to the pagan emperors Vespasian and Hadrian, who are said, by their touch, to have restored sight to the blind; and the fact seems as well established as any of the accounts of cures effected by the touch of our christian and english monarchs.

† See *Occasional Thoughts on the Power of curing the King's Evil*, ascribed to the Kings of England ——— superadded to Werenfel's Dissertation upon superstition in natural things. Lond. 1749.



Some French writers ( says Carte ) ascribe this gift of healing to the king's devotion towards the relics of St. Marculf, in the Church of Corbigny, in Champagne, to which the kings of France, immediately after their coronation at Rheims, used to go in solemn procession: and it must be owned there was formerly a great veneration paid to this saint in England. It was in memory of him that a room in the palace of Westminster frequently mentioned in the rolls of parliament, was called the chamber of St. Marculf; being probably the place where our kings touched for the Evil. It is now (our historian adds) called the painted chamber: and though the name of that saint hath been long forgot in this nation, yet the sanatiye yirtue of our kings still continues." \*

Of the most noted among our sovereigns, as practitioners in this healing art, the following is thought a pretty complete list. Nothing seems to be known in this way of Harold II. or yet of the four succeeding princes; but that Henry II. practised very successfully is said to be attested by Petrus Blesensis, who had been his chaplain. † It seems highly probable that Henry III. likewise was often applied to, and successfully practised in the same way, as John of Geddesden, a physician, who is said to live about that time, advises a scorfulous patient, after his remedies had proved ineffectual, to apply

\* Carte, 1. 357.

† Carte adds, that archbp. *Bradwardine*, Lord Chancellor *Fortescue*, and other grave authors, give the like testimony in behalf of the cure, as well as the practice, by that prince's successors:—[Richard I, John, Henry III, and the three Edwards, we may suppose.] Carte, as before.

to the king for a cure: for which he has been much blamed, and seemingly not without reason, as, in case he deemed the royal touch a certain cure or remedy, he ought to have sent the patient to the king at first, without troubling him with operation and medicine. †

Henry's great son, Edward I, also appears to have been no mean master of this same art; and so, probably, might be his son, Edward II, though otherwise no great conjurer; but as to his son, Edward III, few, if any, seem to have gone beyond him in this sanative employment. *Bradwardine*, who attended him in his wars, and whose counsel is said to have contributed to his success, gives a pompous advertisement, in his book *De Causa Dei*, of the wonderful cures wrought by that prince. *F. le Brun*, however, pays no regard to this. He looks upon it as a crafty stratagem, and says, he does not doubt but that Edward's pretensions to the crown of France excited his zeal to touch those who were diseased; which is not unlikely; princes often, when nothing but politics lie at the bottom, chusing to make religion to swim on the top. ‡ Edward's grandson, Richard II, cannot be supposed to drop or lay aside a practice for which his grandfather and immediate predecessor on the throne had been so celebrated. Nor is it at all likely that his successors, of the rival house of Lancaster, should discontinue this practice, as that might have been construed to imply a consciousness of inferiority to the princes of the other house, or something like a defect in their own title to the crown.

† Occasional Thoughts, as before, 58.

‡ Ibid

Least of all is it to be supposed that this practice should be dropt or neglected afterwards, on the restoration of the York line, in the person of *Edward IV*, who would naturally take care to exercise every prerogative or power supposed to have belonged to his ancestors, and which had any way contributed to their popularity, consequence, or celebrity. This monarch, though of a far less religious or devout cast than his immediate predecessor Henry VI. might not on that account be the less qualified to work these miracles, any more than *Charles II.* afterwards; who, though by his clerical subjects denominated *most religious*, was yet certainly, in fact, one of the *most irreligious* and profligate wretches that ever wore a crown: nevertheless he unquestionably practiced the *royal touch*, as extensively, effectually, and successfully as any one whatever in the whole list of our crowned, or kingly practitioners. And why not?—as the extraordinary gift, supernatural virtue, or miraculous power, belonged entirely, it seems, to his regal quality or dignity; \* and had nothing at all, apparently, to do with his personal or moral character.

*Richard III.* also, after he ascended the throne, may be supposed to possess as much of this supernatural and

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\* Though some, perhaps, would choose to ascribe that gift, virtue, or power, rather to the *throne*, as the *infallibility of the pope* has, by one of our old satirists, been ascribed to the *papal chair*, in some such lines as the following,

If the devil himself should get there,  
Although he be full of all evil,  
Yet such is the virtue in Peter's old chair,  
He would be an infallible devil.



sanative virtue (whatever may be said of the other virtues) as any one of his predecessors or successors; and as it was evidently his interest to omit no popular observance, and to avail himself of whatever had a tendency to excite or gain the admiration of the people, and reconcile them to his government, we may be sure he would not fail to follow, with spirit, the practice in question; and so, by a copious display of its sanative virtue, compensate, in some sort, or degree, for the absence of virtues of another description. There is therefore abundant reason for setting him down among our royal miracle-workers.

None of all these princes appear to have made a greater figure, or to have proceeded with more parade, solemnity, and success, in this royal business or occupation, than Henry VII.—This politic prince, whatever right he might have to the crown, had probably as good a right as any one to try his hand at this notable and wonder working operation, the effect or fame of which he knew full well how to manage profitably and turn to the best account. He accordingly set about it in good earnest; and in order, as may be supposed, to give the process the most striking, sacred, and solemn appearance, and increase its effect, he had a new form, or office, composed and introduced for the purpose. \*

\* Occasional Thoughts, as before, p. 60.—also New An. Reg. 13, [180]—It does not appear, who among Henry's bishops, or ecclesiastics drew up this new office for his use: but we find that it went in the manner and form following—*First, the king, kneeling, shall say. "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. And as soon as he hath said that, he shall say, Give the blessing. The chaplain kneeling before the king, and having a stole about his neck, shall answer and*

The project answered; and his success in this practice is said to have been very considerable. This prince would also sometimes take upon him to *convert heretics*;

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*say, "The Lord be in your heart, and in your lips, to confess all your sins. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Or else he shall say, "Christ hear us. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Then by and by the king shall say, "I confess to God, to the blessed virgin Mary, to all the saints, and to you, that I have sinned in thought, word, and deed; through my fault: I pray holy Mary and all the saints of God to pray for me. The chaplain shall answer and say, "Almighty God have mercy on you, and pardon you all your sins, deliver you from all evil, and confirm you in good, and bring you to everlasting life. Amen. "The almighty and merciful Lord grant you absolution and remission of all your sins, time for repentance and amendment of life, with the grace and comfort of his holy spirit. Amen. This done the chaplain shall say, The Lord be with you. The king shall answer, And with thy spirit. The chaplain, Part of the Gospel according to St. Mark. The king shall answer, Glory to thee O Lord. The chaplain reads the gospel, "Last he appeared to those eleven as they sat at the table: and he exprobated their incredulity and hardness of heart, because they did not believe them that had seen him risen again. And he said to them: going into the whole world, preach the Gospel to all creatures. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be condemned. And them that believe these signs shall follow: in my name shall they cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues. Serpents shall they take up, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall impose hands upon the sick and they shall be whole. Which last clause, (They shall impose &c.) the chaplain repeats as long as the king is handling the sick person. And in the time of repeating the aforesaid words (they shall impose &c.) the clerk of the closet shall kneel before the king, having the sick person on the right hand; and the sick person shall also kneel before the king: and the king shall lay his hand upon the sore of the sick person. This done the chaplain shall make an end of the Gospel. "And so our Lord Jesus, after he spake unto them, was assumed into heaven, and sate on the right hand of God. But they going forth preached every where; our Lord working withal, and confirming the word with signs which followed. Whilst this is reading, the chirurgeon shall lead away the sick person from the king. And after the Gospel the chaplain shall say, The Lord be with you. The king shall answer, And with thy spirit. The chaplain, The beginning of the Gospel according to St. John. The king, Glory to thee O Lord. The chaplain then shall say the Gospel following, [i. e. the first words of John's Gospel, ending at verse 9th.] It was the true light which*

and he would even give them money to facilitate their conversion; \* which was certainly no illadapted device, or unpromising expedient: and it is the more remark-

lightneth every man that cometh into this world.] *Which last clause, It was the true light, &c.) shall be repeated so long as the king shall be crossing the sore of the sick person, with an angel of gold noble, and the sick person to have the same angel hang'd about his neck, and to wear it until he be full whole. This done, the chirurgion shall lead away the sick person as he did before, and then the chaplaln shall make an end of the gospel [i. e. read on from verse the 9th, where he left off before, to the end of verse 14.] Then the chaplain shall say, The Lords name be praised. The King shall answer, Now and for ever. Then shall the chaplain say this collect following, praying for the sick person or persons: O Lord hear my prayer. The king shall answer. And let my cry come unto thee. The chaplain, Let us pray. "Almighty and everlasting God, the eternal health of them that believe; graciously hear us for thy servants for whom we implore the aid of thy mercy, that their health being restored to them, they may give thee thanks in thy church, through Christ our Lord. Amen."*

*This prayer following is to be said secretly, after the sick persons be departed from the king, at his pleasure.—"Almighty God, Ruler and Lord, by whose goodness the blind see, the deaf hear, the dumb speak; the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and all sick persons are healed of their infirmities: By whom also alone the gift of healing is given to mankind and so great a grace, through thine unspeakable goodness toward this realm, is granted unto the kings thereof, that by the sole imposition of their hands, a most grievous and filthy disease should be cured: Mercifully grant that we may give thee thanks therefore, and for this thy singular benefit conferred on us, not to ourselves, but to thy name let us daily give glory; and let us always so exercise ourselves in piety, that we may labour not only diligently to conserve, but every day more and more to encrease thy grace bestowed upon us: And grant that on whose bodies soever we have imposed hands in thy name, through this thy virtue working in them, and through our ministry, may be restored to their former health, and being confirmed therein, may perpetually with us give thanks to thee the chief physician and healer of all diseases; and that henceforth they may so lead their lives, as not their bodies only from sickness, but their souls also from sin may be perfectly purged and cured: through our Lord Jesus Christ thy son, who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God world without end. Amen."*

The reader will readily perceive that the above office, or formulary was entirely of *popish* manufacture; the king and whole nation being

\* Seward's Anecdotes, 1, 38.



able, as his majesty was himself so great a lover of money, and appears to have been so exceedingly close-fisted on other occasions. We may therefore be very sure that the conversion of heretics was of the highest importance in Henry's estimation, and what lay very near to his royal heart. This monarch also, with his queen and eldest son, visited the town of Lynn, where he very probably exercised the *royal touch*, as scrofulous patients may be supposed to have been then, as they are now, very numerous here, all of whom, as well as the rest of the inhabitants, would not fail to give full credit to his majesty's ability to remove the malady and restore the patients to perfect health; and, of course, would be anxious to apply to him, which he would not be likely to discourage. As to *heretics*, there might be then none of them here for him to try his royal hand at their conversion,

His son and high spirited successor, *Henry VIII*, would doubtless be careful to continue the practice of all the rites and ceremonies appertaining to the royal function, which had been handed down to him from his father: and there is every reason to believe that the operation in question would not be forgotten or omitted, were it only to be even with his neighbour and rival, *Francis I*, who certainly performed it, and would not

then *papists*; but it probably differed not much, if at all, from those used afterwards by our *protestant* princes, except in the article of *invoking the Virgin Mary and the Saints*; in which also consists, seemingly, the chief difference between the *Romish* and *English Liturgies*: in other respects the resemblance is great and striking; which is not much to be wondered at, as the model of the latter is pretty well known to have been taken from the former.

be likely to be suffered or allowed to go beyond him on such an occasion. Henry therefore may be safely set down among our said royal practitioners, and even among the most able and powerful of them all. But the *King's Evil* was not the only Evil in whose cure or removal he was particularly concerned: He was no less concerned in the cure or removal of the *Pope's Evil*, another dreadful malady, which had long and grievously afflicted most of the good people of this country, and which was generally deemed incurable, till he took it in hand. All the world know how powerfully and effectually *his royal touch* operated on that occasion — It seems he had also the reputation of being endowed with extraordinary gifts for the cure or prevention of the *cramp*; and we find that he distinguished himself by the consecration of *cramp rings*, which Stephen Gardiner says were much esteemed every where, and often sought for. \* So very eminent was Henry among our royal doctors, and miracle mongers.

*Edward VI*, Henry's amiable son and successor, is not known to have been at all an adept at this princely practice, or even to have been in the least partial to it. He probably thought so very lightly of it as entirely to omit and discard it, as he is also said to have done with respect to the *consecration of cramp rings*, by which his royal father so much distinguished himself. It is likely that Edward, young as he was, had imbibed some sectarian notions which might unfit him for the performance of these sublime operations. Even the roy-

\* Occasional Thoughts, as before, 61.

al and episcopal work of *burning heretics*, so much approved of and delighted in by his predecessors, and afterwards by his immediate successor, and so much called for and applauded by ecclesiastics, was to him an object of utter aversion; and if he once suffered it to be done, it was involuntary and against his own better judgement, through the importunate intreaties and urgent expostulations of his bishops, and particularly Cranmer, to whom therefore the guilt and infamy of the deed must properly or chiefly belong. \* There is reason to believe that no such doings would have sullied or disgraced his reign had he been left to judge and act for himself. It is probable he was left so to judge and act with respect to the *royal touch*; so that we need not be surprised at his declining the practice.

From *Mary*, his bloody sister and successor, a different conduct might be expected: and her conduct certainly was, almost in every thing, very different from his. Superstitious as she was, and bigoted to the last degree, it is not to be supposed that she should shrink from the performance of any rite or ceremony, however absurd, that had been in request with her popish predecessors, or devoutly practiced by them. This of the *royal touch* could never escape her attention: nay it is

\* So little did those reformers know of the *spirit* of christianity: and yet they are still held up, by a numerous and powerful religious party among us, as patterns of orthodoxy and pure religion: as if those men who knew the least of the spirit of Christ, and the principles of common justice, were most likely to know most of the doctrines and precepts of the gospel, and be of all men the fittest to follow; or as if that religion should be the most orthodox, pure, and estimable, that shews the least of the spirit of the New Testament, and even allows of intolerance, persecution, and murder.



expressly said that the office was indeed fairly written out for her use; [that very office probably, which has been above inserted;] so that there can be no question of her touching for the Evil, as devoutly, and as successfully perhaps, as any of the rest. ‡

As to *Elizabeth*, heretic as she was, her legitimacy questioned, and her title litigated, she *touched* for the Evil with a success acknowledged even by the papists themselves, who are said to ascribe it to the *sign of the cross*.\* A case is mentioned by *Carte* of a Roman Catholic, who, being put into prison, perhaps for recusancy, and terribly afflicted with the Evil, was, after he had been there a tedious time, at a vast expence to physicians without the least relief, *touched* by this queen, and perfectly cured: which gave him occasion to say, he was now convinced by undoubted experience, that the pope's excommunication of her signified nothing, since she still continued blessed with so miraculous a quality.—† It was well for the poor fellow that he was not a *puritan*, or he might have gone long enough without his cure, as her majesty is known to have been inexorably pitiless and spiteful against that class of her subjects.

‡ Her conduct, in torturing and burning those whom she deemed *heretics*, cannot well be thought more diabolical or execrable than that of her successors *Elizabeth* and *James*, toward those whom they viewed in a similar light: the latter *burnt* them, as *Mary* did, and no less cruelly and unjustly; and the former imprisoned, tortured, hanged, embowelled, and quartered them. This was the good queen Bess. Her whole bench of bishops, all of the right reformed and *evangelical* stamp, applauded her deeds.

\* That part of the ceremony, however, appears to have been expunged in the next reign, and discontinued afterwards till that of James II. without any diminution of the effect. See *Oc. Thoughts*, as before, 62.

† *Carte*, 1, 357.

Of *James I.* with his strong faith in ghosts and witches, and lofty notions of indefeasible right, royal prerogative and king-craft, it was not to be supposed that he, of all men, would think meanly or lightly of this royal and religious operation. It accordingly appears that he very readily and warmly engaged in it, and actually became a most dexterous and eminent practitioner—to the no small satisfaction and comfort, as we may suppose, of his liege subjects, as well as advancement of his own fame, or at least, the gratification of his vanity, of which it is well known he possessed no common or scanty portion. Nothing could delight him more than the idea that he could work miracles: his courtiers called him *Solomon*; but that idea was calculated to make him think himself as still greater than even *Solomon*. We are not informed how many patients underwent or felt his royal touch; but there is every reason to suppose and believe that the number must have been very considerable.

His unfortunate son and successor *Charles I.* was no less distinguished in this same way than his royal father had been. Great numbers are said to have been by him both touched and cured; of whom not a few were little children, which has been urged as a proof that it could not be ascribed to the effect or strength of imagination. Carte observes, that Dr. Heylyn, an eye witness of such cures, says, “I have seen some children brought before the King by the hanging sleeves, some hanging at their mother’s breasts, and others in the arms of their nurses,

all cured without the help of a serviceable imagination.”

‡ Both Heylyn and Carte were full of faith in these miracles. If they were right, the decapitation of Charles must have been a great loss to the nation, and especially to those who were afflicted with the Evil. For twelve years or more, after that event, not one of these miracles appears to have been wrought in this country.

As to *Oliver Cromwell*, it does not appear that he ever tried his hand at this wonder-working operation; conscious, it may be supposed, that it did not belong to his province, or to the protectoral office and dignity, with which he was invested. What he would have done, had he accepted or assumed the regal title, cannot be said or known with absolute certainty: though the probability seems to bear against his even then becoming a practitioner, as it would hardly have met the approbation of his best friends, or accorded with the ideas of his most trusty and powerful coadjutors, or even with his own.

After a total cessation or suspension of this ancient princely practice, during the whole time of the Commonwealth and Protectorate, it revived again at the memorable *restoration*; and *Charles II.* took it up vigorously and solemnly, and on a very extensive scale. The Register of the Royal Chapel is said to exhibit a list of 92,107 persons touched by him for the Evil in a certain number of years; \* not including, it seems, the whole of his reign; so that double that number, or more for aught we know, may have passed under his hand during the whole course of his government. Yet we find he

‡ Carte, 1, 358, note. \* Athenæum No. 4.



practised only at some particular seasons of the year ; at least after the summer of 1662, when a royal proclamation was issued to inform the public that such would be the case from thenceforth. His majesty had been then a practitioner full two years, during which time there is reason to believe that he had touched some thousands. He began the work almost immediately after his restoration, so that it may be considered among the first acts of his reign. Of the state of the practice in his royal hands, or under his wise management, a pretty accurate idea may be formed from the following extracts—out of some of the principal Public Papers of that era.

The following passage appeared in the weekly Paper called *Mercurius Politicus*, of June 28, 1660—“Saturday being appointed by his majesty to touch such as are troubled by the Evil, a great number of poor afflicted creatures were met together, many brought in chairs and flaskets; and being appointed by his majesty to repair to the Banqueting House, his majesty sat in a chair of state, and stroked all that were brought to him, and then put about each of their necks a white ribbon with an angel of gold on it. In this manner his majesty stroked above 600; and such was his princely patience and tenderness to the poor afflicted creatures, that though it took up a very long time, his majesty, never weary of well doing, was pleased to make enquiry, whether there were any more who had not been touched. After prayers were ended the duke of Buckingham brought a towel, and the earl Pembroke a bason and ewer; who, after

they had made obeysance to his majesty, kneeled down till his majesty had washed."—This was within a month after his majesty's arrival.

The next is from the *Parliamentary Journal*, of July 9, 1660; a fortnight after the other; and is thus curiously worded—"The kingdom having for a long time been troubled with the Evil, by reason of his majesty's absence, great numbers have flocked for cure. His sacred majesty on Monday last touched 250 in the Banqueting-House; among whom, when his majesty was delivering the gold, one shuffled himself in, out of a hope of profit, which had not been stroked; but his majesty presently discovered him, saying, this man has not yet been touched. His majesty hath for the future appointed every Friday for the cure, at which time 200 and no more are to be presented to him, who are first to repair to *Mr. Knight*, the King's surgeon, living at the Cross Guns, in Russell Street, Covent Garden, over against the Rose Tavern, for their tickets.—That none might lose their labour he thought fit to make it known that he will be at his house every Wednesday and Thursday, from two till six of the Clock, to attend that service.—And if any *person of quality* shall send to him he will wait upon them at their lodgings, upon notice given to him."—In the same paper of July 30. and August 6. Notice was given, that no more would be touched till about Michaelmas; and in the *Mercurius Politicus*, of February 28, 1661, it is said, that *many came twice or thrice for the sake of the gold.*

Another weekly paper, called *Mercurius Publicus*,

of February 21. 1661, had the following passage—"We cannot but give notice that certain persons (too many one would think) who having the *King's Evil*, and have been *touched* by his SACRED MAJESTY, have got the forehead to come twice or thrice, alleging they were never there before, till divers witnesses proved the contrary; which hath forced his MAJESTY to give order that whosoever hereafter comes to be touched, shall first bring to his MAJESTY'S Chirurgeons a certificate from the *Minister* and Church-Wardens, (where they live) that they never were touched by his MAJESTY before: the next healing will begin six weeks hence."

In the same paper of May 9. 1661, appeared the following notice or advertisement: "WHITEHALL. We are commanded to give notice, that his MAJESTY finds the Season already so hot, that it will be neither safe nor fit to continue his healing such as have the king's Evil; and therefore that his MAJESTIES good subjects therein concerned, would at present forbear to come to court; Friday next (may 10,) and Wednesday (May 15.) being the last days that his MAJESTY intends to heal, till the heat of the weather be allayed, and his MAJESTY'S further pleasure known, whereof his good subjects shall have timely notice."

The same paper of August 15. 1661, contained the passage following:—"We are commanded to give notice That his *Majesty* finds the season such, that it will neither be safe nor fit to continue his Healing those that have the King's Evil; and therefore that His *Majesties* good subjects therein concerned do forbear to come to



Court till All-Saints Day next, till which time His *Majesty* doth not intend to Heal."

In the very same Paper, of July 17. 1662, appeared the following curious courtly advertisement: "*Hampton Court*.—His Majesty lately set forth a *Proclamation* for the better ordering of those who repair to the Court for cure of the disease called the *King's Evil*, wherein his Majesty being as ready and willing to relieve the necessities and diseases of his good subjects by his Sacred Touch, which shall come for cure, as any of his Royal Predecessors, in which, by the Grace and Blessing of God, he hath in an extraordinary measure had good success, and yet in his princely wisdom, foreseeing that fit times are necessary to be appointed for the performing of that great work of Charity, doth declare his Royal pleasure to be, that from henceforth the usual times for presenting such persons, shall be from the Feast of *All-saints*, commonly called *Alhallowtide*, to a week before *Christmas*, and in the month before *Easter*, being more convenient for the temperature of the season, and in respect of any contagion that may happen in this near access to his Majesties Sacred Person. His Majesty doth further command that none presume to repair to Court for cure of the said disease, but within the limits appointed, and that such persons who come for that purpose, bring certificates under the hands of the Parson, Vicar, or Minister and Church-Wardens of the Parishes where they dwell, testifying that they have not at any time before been touched by the King; further charging all Justices of Peace, Constables, &c.

that they suffer not any to pass but such as have such Certificates, under pain of his Majestys displeasure: And that his Majesties Subjects may have the better knowledge of it, his Majesties will is, that this Proclamation be published and affixed in some open place in every Market Town of this Realm." ‡

To the above Extracts, only one more shall be here added, from another Public Paper, called *The Newes*, of May 18. 1664.—“His Sacred Majesty having declared it to be his royal will and purpose to continue the healing of his people for the Evil during the month of May, and then give over till Michaelmas next, I am commanded to give Notice thereof, that the people may not come up to the town in the interim and loose their labour.” \*

From these premises it plainly appears that the king really pretended to be endowed with the power or gift of working miracles, and of healing or curing one of the most obstinate and incurable diseases incident to the human frame, even by his *touch*. Most curious and ludicrous it surely must be to see such a man as Charles making such a pretension, and affecting to be hand and glove with Heaven; and no less so to see the whole nation, or at least the whole body of the church folks, or national religionists, (clergy and laity) which constituted the great bulk of the people, giving him full credit for every thing, and deeming the least doubt or hesita-

‡ This proclamation therefore must have been published and affixed in some open place at Lynn.

\* See the *Athenæum* No. 4, p. 360.

tion about his miraculous claims as a sure indication of disloyalty, and scarcely short of high treason. Allowing or supposing his majesty to have really possessed this miraculous power, or supernatural healing gift, still it must appear rather a queer case that it should be affected by the *temperature of the seasons*, and actually controlled, overpowered, and crippled, as it were, by the *hot weather*; and that the royal operator, in the meantime, in case he persisted in his benevolent practice, or labour of love, during the dog-days, and for sometime before and after, should be exposed to the imminent danger of some alarming *contagion*: at least he and his courtiers seemed evidently to have had such apprehension. In all this, however, his loyal and admiring subjects could discover nothing, either marvelous or suspicious, or yet any way inconsistent. Their sovereign's miraculous claims found in them the most ready acquiescence. With some, indeed, especially among the poor persecuted nonconformists, the case was otherwise. They disbelieved those royal pretensions. But it only served to strengthen the public prejudice against them; being generally looked upon as an additional and sure proof of their disaffection, or their moral and political depravity.— So much for Charles's supernatural powers and miraculous deeds.

His brother and successor, *James II.* another of our *religious* monarchs, continued this practice with unabated zeal, solemnity, and devotion. He appears to have made some improvement in the process; particularly by restoring the sign of the cross, which had



been unaccountably omitted by his father, and grandfather. It is probable that none of its ancient appendages were by him forgotten, or left unrestored, if he did not also, in his princely wisdom, devise some others, equally suitable and edifying: and had the crown continued in his family, the good subjects of these realms would hardly have failed of having the institution or practice still preserved amongst them, and observed in all things according to the pattern exhibited by him. But his unexpected abdication forced things into another channel, and deprived us of so fair and important a chance. James is supposed to have practised at Whitehall as frequently, in proportion to the length of his reign, as his brother had done. But as his reign, compared with that of Charles, was very short, (though, in some respects, much too long) it is not to be supposed that he, like the other, could boast of his myriads of patients and cures. It appears, however, that he was very assiduous in this business, as well when his occasions called him abroad, as when detained within the precincts of his own court or palace: hence when he went to Oxford in 1687, about the affair of Magdalen-College and other matters, part of his time there is known to have been employed in *touching*; which shews how very partial he was to the practice, and how very ready he was to attend to it on every occasion that might offer. \* *Dr. Sykes* in a letter to *Dr. Charlett*, of September 4, 1787, expresses himself thus, "This morning the king *touches* in Christ Church Quire; hears one Father Hall this morn-

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\* See the *Athenæum* for April and May 1809.

ing at the new Popish Chapel there; but whether he will be there in the afternoon, or at University College, I know not." And *Creech* in a letter to *Dr. Charlett*, of September 6, the same year, says, "On sunday morning the king *touched*. *Warner* and *White* officiating: all that waited on his majesty kneeled at the prayers, beside the Duke of Beaufort, who stood all the time." † All this shews how partial and devoted James was to this practice, as well as how obsequiously the learned Oxonians observed and contemplated this part of their sovereign's conduct. Had he not gone beyond this royal *touch*, neither the Magdalenians nor any other Oxonian fraternity had ever resisted his mandates: his popularity, in that case, might have been as unbounded as that of our present sovereign, and his descendants might have reigned here gloriously to this day,

At the Revolution this practice or operation was again suspended. *William III.* was a Presbyterian, and *Oliver Cromwell* an Independent: the spirit and principles of these sects seem not to be congenial with, or favourable to the practice; nor does this gift or privilege appear to extend to sectarian or heterodox princes, but only to those of the Romish, or Church of England faith.

At the accession of *Anne*, of course, this sanative virtue and practice again revived, and numbers were *touched* by the royal hand of that illustrious princess, among whom was the late celebrated *Dr. Samuel Johnson*, then in his childhood. At the death of *Anne*, the

† Athenæum as before.

said virtue forsook the British throne: at least none of our succeeding monarchs have yet ventured to revive the practice. The two first princes of the present dynasty had, doubtless, their reasons for refraining from it; but as it is not known what they were, it is impossible to say whether their majesties were governed therein by wise or unwise, proper or improper motives. We know that actions very right in themselves may yet be performed upon very wrong and unjustifiable principles. There is, however, no room to suppose that these two potentates were in any measure influenced in this instance by what their enemies, the Jacobites, would be ready to insinuate: an apprehension of their own title to the Crown being defective. The voice of the Nation (than which there can be no better title) had placed them on the throne of these realms.

His present majesty has hitherto followed the example of his two immediate predecessors, in not restoring or resuming this dormant or neglected branch of the royal prerogative. If he ever should hereafter, at any time, think proper to restore or resume it, there can be no manner of doubt of his meeting with ample success, as well as abundant employment. In that case it may be presumed that multitudes of patients would soon be flocking in from all quarters, not excepting the County of Norfolk and the parts about Lynn Regis. His resolving to resume the practice would instantly occasion the revival of the national faith in the efficacy of the operation; and so far would such a resumption or experiment be from



endangering his majesty's fair fame and popularity, that it would, in all probability, augment the same, and so render him for the residue of his reign, within the British Isles at least, more popular and more celebrated than ever. But as we are not warranted to expect that his majesty will ever try the experiment, or put to the test the faith of his subjects in the miraculous efficacy of his *touch*, we shall here drop the subject as far as it may concern him.

It appears that after the death of queen *Anne* it was firmly believed by a great part of the nation, that the sanative virtue, or miraculous power which she was allowed to possess, still existed in the person of a certain exiled prince of her family. In proof of which a story was industriously propagated of one *Christopher Lovel*, of Bristol, who being most sadly and grievously afflicted with the Evil, after having recourse to the most eminent of the faculty, and availed himself of the best medical help in vain, went at last to the Continent, in quest of the said prince. Having found his royal highness, and being kindly received, he underwent the operation of the *touch*, got perfectly cured, and returned home safe and sound, in full health and high spirits, after an absence of four months and some few days. Carte, the historian, and many more, gentlemen of the faculty as well as others, visited him, examined the case thoroughly, and pronounced the cure complete. Some of them, of whom one was *Dr. Lanc*, an eminent physician, considered it as one of the most extraordinary and wonderful events that had ever happened.—After this, who can doubt

the reality of the fact, that such a sanative virtue, gift, or power, was actually possessed by the said prince?—It seems, however, that the miracle did not effect a radical cure: poor Lovel relapsed again, some time after, and died of the Evil at last. Such, in all probability, were all the other great cures performed by the rest of our royal doctors, although many of them, like this, were attested as *perfect cures*, by very respectable, but too credulous witnesses.

It is somewhat remarkable that *Whiston*, as well as *Carte*, believed in the efficacy of the royal touch: the former derives it from the *prayer* used at the time, while the latter seems to consider it as a divine or miraculous gift bestowed upon, or inherent to all the rightful heirs to the English throne. Both of them were men of considerable respectability, and very confident, it seems, of the soundness of their respective opinions in this case. Their opinions however appear equally untenable, and may pretty safely be pronounced utterly unfounded. The favourable effects, or apparent benefit which some of those patients might experience after having undergone the operation of the *touch*, must doubtless be ascribed to their own operative faith and strength of imagination, rather than to any supernatural virtue proceeding from that princely performance, or any miraculous gift possessed by the royal practitioners. To the same cause must also be attributed the salutary effects said to have sometimes resulted from the pretended animal magnetism, as well as such empirical charms and nostrums as have acquired an uncommon share of

popular fame, or have stood very high in the good opinion of the public. A patient's favourable opinion of a remedy administered to him, and his very confident expectation of deriving from it very essential benefit, are allowed to have had a happy effect, and to have done great things sometimes in very serious and dangerous cases.

Now we may rest assured that on no other ground but this can we reasonably account for benefits experienced by many who underwent the royal touch; admitting that to have been really the case; for it is too absurd to suppose that those royal personages were actually endowed with power to work miracles, or that the ceremony performed, or yet the gold given to the patients to wear about their necks, had in them any supernatural or healing virtue to render them capable of producing such effects.

It must be rather mortifying to our national vanity and pride, to think that our dear ancestors, for seven hundred years, firmly believed in the miraculous efficacy of the royal touch, in scrofulous complaints. \* But

\* Would not the case have been the same with their descendants of the present generation, had our three last monarchs thought proper to continue the practice, or the present sovereign chose to revive it?—How strikingly was the easy faith of the nation exemplified in the implicit credit it gave to a late premier's possessing extraordinary and plenary ability to heal all the national or political maladies of Britain, of Europe, and of the world? And had he pretended to a power to cure the scrofula, or any other bodily complaint, with his *touch*, would it not have been readily believed by all his numerous admirers, and by the greatest part of our countrymen? And would not numerous witnesses have soon appeared, ready to attest the reality and completeness of his cures?—Circumstances seem evidently to favour these conclusions: nor will



while we reprobate, or pity their stupid and miserable credulity, in this and other instances, let us not forget that we ourselves are not without our errors and failings, and those no less inexcusable and degrading: witness our general belief in witchcraft, conjuration, prodigies, and newspapers, together with the unshaken faith of multitudes in *Richard Brothers*, *Susanna Southcote*,

the story of the *Dumb Doctor*, still fresh in every body's memory, (not to mention other cases) allow of our making here an exception in favour of the inhabitants of Lynn!

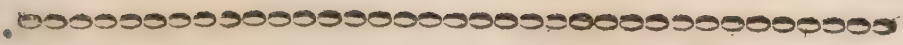
For the sake of those readers who live at a distance from Lynn, the affair here last alluded to may require some explanation. Be it known therefore, that the empirical Adventurer, called the *Dumb Doctor*, made his appearance at Lynn about four and twenty years ago; and for a good while after spent most of his time between this town and Wisbeach. It was given out that he had been deaf and dumb from his birth, and that he was a native of New England, or some part of North America, where he had, somehow, (miraculously, or at least in some very extraordinary and wonderful manner no doubt) acquired very deep knowledge and skill in the healing art; and after having performed great and astonishing cures in his own country, had actually crossed the wide Atlantic out of pure kindness and compassion to the sick and infirm folk of this kingdom, most of whose complaints he might be expected capable of removing.——The tale very generally took with our good townsmen, and numbers of ailing people, gentle and simple, well-bred and ill-bred, from all quarters, flocked to the impostor for relief. Not a few of them also declared that they had actually derived great benefit from his prescriptions.——Thus he went on very prosperously, till an old acquaintance of his unluckily came to town, blew him up, and blasted all his hopes. He then suddenly decamped, and was never since seen or heard of in these parts.——It seems he had belonged to a company of strolling players, from which honourable fraternity he had been on some occasion expelled: upon which he took up the medical profession, pretending to be deaf and dumb, and a native of North America, as was before stated.—This may serve to shew that with all our skepticism and infidelity, and our large stock of fancied light and discernment, learning and refinement, we are by no means so far removed from the easy faith and blind credulity of our ancestors, or become such complete proofs against the wiles of imposture, or the specious arts of daring deceivers, as might be supposed, from our confident, loud, and boisterous boastings.

and many other notorious impostors of different descriptions : and it may be justly questioned, if there ever was a period when the inhabitants of this country have been more inexcusably credulous, more easily and egregiously imposed upon, or more generally and universally duped, than in this very age.—But we will here close this long section; hoping that its contents will not fail to contribute, at least in some measure, to the amusement and satisfaction of the inquisitive and candid reader; especially if he ever wished to learn the history of the royal touch, of which he will find here, perhaps, a more particular and circumstantial account than in any other publication.

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*End of Part II.*

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# HISTORY OF LYNN.



## PART III.



### HISTORY OF LYNN FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NORMANS IN ENGLAND TO THE REFORMATION.

CHAP. I. Observations on the Conquest—account of the changes then introduced—their effects on the kingdom at large, and on Lynn and its vicinity in particular.

The conquest of England by the Normans appears to have been no less complete than those which had been before effected by the Romans, the Saxons, and the Danes. The English grandees were generally stript of their possessions, and their lands divided among the conqueror's chief favourites and great captains, who then became the nobles of the realm, and from whom are descended most of our present great families. This conquest was obtained much easier than any of those that preceded it. A single battle now determined the fate of the whole country, partly, as was before observed, through the defection, intrigues, and influence of the clergy, most of whom were in the interest of the in-



vader, as he was supported by their holy father the Pope, who had distinguished him by such special marks of his favour as could not fail of attaching them to his cause.

William's army consisted of 60,000 men; not all his own subjects, (for his duchy could not furnish and maintain such a force) but made up chiefly of adventurers, or soldiers of fortune, who had engaged in the expedition, on the promise of forfeited lands, in proportion to the numbers they brought with them. Accordingly, some are said to have afterward bestowed on them no less than 700 manors, others 5, 4, 3, 2, and 100, or less; insomuch that all the land in England, if we except the royal demesnes, the church lands, and those annexed to the cities and boroughs, were in no more than about 700 hands, whose wide possessions were again distributed among their numerous vassals, according to the principles of the feudal system, which was now completely introduced and established in England. \*

In consequence of this change, it became a fundamental maxim, and necessary principle of our English tenures, that the king is the universal lord and original proprietor of all the lands in his kingdom, and that no man doth or can possess any part of it, but what has, mediately or immediately, been derived from him, to be held upon feudal services. This engrafting of the feudal tenure on almost all the land in the kingdom, is said to have been the most important alteration which

\* Sullivan's Lectures on the Feudal System, and Laws of England, p 180.

our civil and military policy then underwent. \* The great lords held their lands of the king, by certain services, as all their vassals held theirs also of them. Thus the king had the whole power of the country closely connected with, and dependent upon himself. This state of things was calculated, no doubt, to secure the kingdom from external danger, and may be considered as laying the foundation of that high military character which England afterwards held among its neighbours.

A vast demesne was now set apart for the king, amounting to 1422 manors, together with many other lands which had never been erected or formed into manors. Besides these he had the profits of all his feudal tenures, his worships, marriages, and reliefs; the benefit of excheats, either upon failure of heirs, or forfeiture; the goods of felons and traitors; the profits of his courts of justice; besides many other casualties, which amounted to an immense revenue; insomuch that the Conqueror, as we are informed, had no less than 1060*l.* 10*s.* a day, the annual amount of which, allowing for the comparative value of money, &c. was equal to several millions (perhaps twenty or more) of ours. † So large a revenue might probably justify the saying of Fortescue, that originally the King of England was the richest in Europe,

We are told, that William's military tenants were obliged, on all occasions, to furnish 60,000 knights, completely equipped, and ready to serve forty days at

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\* Blackstone, ii. 51, and iv. 411. † See Carte, 1. 423.

their own expence. Every seaport also, in proportion to its ability, was obliged to find, in time of danger, one or more ships properly furnished with men and arms; which, joined with such other ships as the king hired were generally an overmatch for the invaders. \* Thus we see how powerful and formidable England became after the conquest, in its means of defence and resistance, under its Norman sovereigns.

Whilst we are noticing the changes now introduced into this country, it may not be improper to observe, that the feudal system was a favourite branch of the Norman policy, and which they appear carefully to have established wherever they could get a firm footing. They did so, not only in Normandy and England, but also in *Sicily*, which they appear to have subdued much about the time of which we are now speaking, and which has groaned under the oppression of that System ever since, even to this day. Of the commencement of that order of things in that island, and its present aspect and bearings, a very recent writer gives the following account, which may serve to cast some light on the state of our country at the period now under consideration.

“Roger the Norman, conqueror of Sicily, and contemporary with our William the First, on his accession to the throne, divided the lands of the kingdom into three portions—One third of these was called the demesnes of the Crown, which are administered by the corporation of the royal towns where they are situated; each town, according to the revenue of its demesne

\* Sullivan's Lectures, No. xvii, xviii, and xxviii.



lands, pays to the king a certain income, besides maintaining the police, roads, &c. &c. and the tribute which each territory pays is called the royal patrimony.—The next third part of these lands was distributed by King Roger among his nobles; some of these were fiefs contained within the territory of the demesne towns, while others had a town of their own, of which the estate or barony formed the territory. Sometimes the townships of these baronial towns have estates belonging to them, which are administered by their corporations, called *giurati*.—The remaining third portion was either distributed among the bishops and mitred abbots, or served to endow the several Convents, which in an age fertile in superstition were so generally established.

“This distribution of property has remained thus ever since the Norman Conquest; and all the noble fiefs, as they are held by a grant in military tenure, are supposed to belong to the crown, and given to a family and their descendants, subject to military service. This circumstance supposes an absolutely strict entail, which prevents the sale of fiefs without the king’s sanction; (*verbo regio*;) it supposes also the indivisibility of the fief—hence the rights of primogeniture, which has reduced the younger branches of families to a most miserable state. Thus the lands of the nobles are entailed in their families. Those of the church are attached to it, and the demesne lands are equally so to the corporations, as above-mentioned. \*

\* Leckie’s Historical Survey of the foreign affairs of Great Britain, Part I, page 57, &c.

Of the orders of Society in Sicily, the same writer says—"Those princes, dukes, marquisses, and barons, who hold estates which have a town, or sufficient population, are called parliamentary barons, and have a right to sit in the assembly of the nobles: all others are called rustic fiefs, and give no right of this kind to their landlords, though they be decorated with a title.—The next order of men are the clergy, who form a distinct assembly or house of parliament, and consists of archbishops, bishops, archimandrites, mitred abbots, &c. The principal of these are younger brothers of the noble families; so that, in fact, the ecclesiastical house of parliament is tied to the lords.—The next order of men consists of a second rank of nobles, who hold fiefs without burghs, or towns, and who, though they have the same splendid titles, have no seat in the parliament. The next order are the burghers of the different towns; these apply to agriculture, to the church, and to the medical and legal professions: then come the artizans and peasants. These are the peasants of the demesne, and those who are the vassals of the parliamentary lords.

After noticing the multiplied miseries under which the bulk of the people is involved by this wretched order of things, which forms an insuperable obstacle in the way of national happiness and prosperity, our author informs us, that, according to the original constitution of Sicily, the three houses of parliament have the faculty of granting supplies to the Crown; but the majority of the two houses (he says) are sufficient; by which means the house of commons, or demesnial as-

sembly becomes totally nugatory, and the lords and ecclesiastics, after generously granting the supplies, throw the whole burden of them on the commons. Whatever remonstrances are made, the matter is left to the decision of those who have done the evil, and the mischief is thus perpetuated:" ‡ for it seems they never think of yielding in the least to the remonstrances of the commons, or complaints of the people.

In Sicily the feudal system exists without its original energies; and it may be said to exist in its very worst state, so as to spend all its force in oppressing beyond measure the middle and lower orders of the community, or great body of the nation, without contributing to the real benefit of any. The consequence is that the people, for the most part, groan hopelessly under their burdens, and seem perfectly indifferent about the issue of the present contest with France. Yet some people seem to wonder at their supineness, and their not rising as one man in defence of their king and country. They might probably have done so, had their rulers been wise, and left them what would have been worth contending for, or defending. When rulers cease to feel for the people, it is not unnatural or unusual for the people also to cease to feel for them. This, perhaps, will apply to many of the recent changes among the European powers.

Beside the feudal system, our Norman conqueror introduced into this country divers other innovations—One of which was the separation of the Spiritual courts

‡ Leckie, as before. p. 66.



from the Civil; which was effected (says Blackstone) in order to ingratiate the new king with the popish clergy, who for sometime before had been endeavouring all over Europe to exempt themselves from the secular power; and whose demands the conqueror, like a politic prince, thought it prudent to comply with, by reason that their reputed sanctity had a great influence over the minds of the people; and because all the little learning of the times was engrossed into their hands, which made them necessary men, and by all means to be gained over to his interests. And this was the more easily effected, because the episcopal sees being then in the breast of the king, he had taken care to fill them with Italian and Norman prelates. This innovation produced very grievous consequences; so that by degrees the rights and privileges of the English clergy were delivered up into the hands of the Pope, who taxed them at his pleasure, and in process of time drained the kingdom of immense treasures: for besides all his other dues, arising from annates, first fruits, peter-pence, &c. he extorted large sums of money from the clergy for their preferments in the church. He advanced foreigners to the richest bishopricks, who never resided in their dioceses, nor so much as set foot upon English ground, but sent for all their profits to a foreign country; nay so covetous was his Holiness, that before livings became void, he sold them provisionally among his Italians, insomuch that neither the king nor his clergy had any thing to dispose of, but every thing was bargained before hand at Rome. \*

\* Blackstone iv. 408. Neal Hist. Pur. I. 1.

Another grievous innovation, introduced at the same period, consisted in the depopulation of whole countries for the purposes of the king's royal diversion ; and subjecting both them and all the ancient forests of the kingdom to the unreasonable severities of forest laws imported from the continent, whereby the slaughter of a beast was made almost as penal as the death of a man. In the Saxon times, though no man was allowed to kill or chase the king's deer, yet he might start any game, pursue, or kill it, upon his own estate. But the rigour of these new constitutions vested the sole property of all the game in England in the king alone; and no man was entitled to disturb any fowl of the air, or beast of the field, of such kinds as were specially reserved for the royal amusement of the sovereign, without express licence from the king, by a grant of a chase, or free warren: and those franchises were granted as much with a view to preserve the breed of animals as to indulge the subject. From a similar principle to which, though the forest laws are now mitigated, and by degrees grown entirely obsolete, yet from this root has sprung a bastard slip, known by the name of the *game law*, now arrived to and wantoning in its highest vigour: both founded upon the same unreasonable notions of permanent property in wild creatures; and both productive of the same tyranny to the commons; but with this difference, that the forest laws established only one mighty hunter throughout the land, the game laws have raised a little Nimrod in every manor. \*

## 2 T

\* Blackstone iv. 409.--Our *Game Laws* are not only exceedingly detested,

Another innovation produced by the conquest was, “narrowing the remedial influence of the country-courts, the great seats of Saxon justice, and extending the ori-

by those of the middle as well as lower orders, throughout the country, (which constitute the major part of the nation,) but seem also to be among the most grievous and disgraceful of all our present laws. In no view can they be deemed respectable or defensible. Nor is the conduct of our magistrates perhaps ever more unseenly or disreputable than in the unfeeling, cruel, and relentless rigour with which they put these vile laws in execution. In nothing probably more than in this does our present state resemble that of France before the revolution. The Game Laws there were then intolerably severe and grievous, and enforced by the magistrates with unrelenting and diabolical rigour; so that they used to fill even the very Gallies with their hapless victims: all which recoiled with vengeance upon them and their abettors, the privileged orders, in the dreadful change which ensued. Those laws no longer exist in that country: but a recent traveller, (Pinkney,) informs us, “that though there are now no game laws in France, there is a decency and moderation in the lower orders, which answer the same purpose. No one presumes to shoot game, except on land of which he is the proprietor or tenant.”—No where in England are these laws supposed to be more grievously felt than in Norfolk; of which a popular and respectable author of the present day speaks as follows—“What is denominated *Game* is very plentiful in this county. The arable lands affording both food and cover, and the gentry, being particularly attached to the amusement of sporting, have recourse to the strong arm of the law for its preservation. This tenacity on the part of the landholders, producing covetous desires in the tenants, is a strong inducement to poaching, and the source of numberless disagreements, which too frequently terminate in suits at law. Hence they are oppressive to one party and disgraceful to the other. The various statutes, called “the Game Laws,” are justly deemed the opprobrium of the English code; and in no county perhaps are these statutes acted upon with greater rigor than they usually are in Norfolk. The endless litigations upon this despicable point have lately become the subject of theatrical ridicule; and this county has on the occasion been made the *butt* of dramatic satire. “Searchum, get warrants immediately, for seizing guns, nets, and snares; let every dog in the parish be collected for hanging to-morrow morning. Give them a taste for *Norfolk discipline*.” Happy would it be for the country, if ridicule, as reason has hitherto failed, should be able to induce the legislature to abrogate laws, which, as they were made to support an assumed claim, can only be continued in force to protect an usurped right.” [Beauties of England v. xi. p. 90, &c.]—



ginal jurisdiction of the king's justiciaries to all kinds of causes arising in all parts of the kingdom. To this end the *Aula-regis*, with all its multifarious authority, was erected; and a capital justiciary appointed, with powers so large and boundless, that he became at length a tyrant to the people, and formidable to the crown itself. The constitution of this court, and the judges themselves who presided there, were fetched from Normandy: and the consequence naturally was, the ordaining that all proceedings in the king's courts should be carried on *in the Norman [or French] instead of the English language*:—a provision the more necessary, because none of his Norman justiciaries understood English; but as evident a badge of slavery as ever was imposed upon a conquered people." And yet the nation was obliged to

## 2 T 2

It is most disgusting to men of sound and liberal minds to hear with what complacency, selfgratulation, as well as selfimportance, the magistrates, at the convivial meetings of the gentry, will be sometimes expatiating on the rigour of their proceedings against the transgressors of the game laws, and describing how effectually they curb and keep in awe the farmers, and trounce to their utter undoing some of the most active among the lower order of poachers. Such a conduct is nothing less than a publishing of their own shame, and a boasting of their own misdoings; and had they expanded and reflecting minds, or any minds at all, they would blush for such a conduct, and carefully and studiously refrain from it, as well as from all manner of excess in their proceedings against poachers, many of whom with their luckless families have been utterly ruined by them. Some of those ill-fated culprits have perished in prison, after long and rigorous confinement: one of whom, named *Saunders*, died miserably in goal, after a *six years* incarceration, who probably was as well bred as some of his relentless judges; on which occasion the following lines were composed:

" *Epitaph on Nathaniel Saunders, gentleman:*

" Nat! thou'st escap'd just in the nick of time!

" Thine was a barbarous and a bloody crime!

" How long confin'd?—six years—that's only fair;

" What was his crime? the scoundrel kill'd a hare!"

submit to it and bear it, for ages. The former plainness and simplicity now gave way to the abstruseness, chicanery, and subtilty, which have ever since so unhappily characterized our legal proceedings. †

Another of the hateful innovations of the same memorable period was, the introduction of the *trial by combat*, for the decision of all civil and criminal questions of fact in the last resort. This was the immemorial practice of all the northern nations, but first reduced to regular and stated forms among the Burgundi, about the close of the fifth century; and from them it passed to other nations, particularly the Franks and the Normans; which last had the honour to establish it here, though clearly an unchristian, as well as most uncertain method of trial. But it was a sufficient recommendation of it to the conqueror and his warlike countrymen, that it was the usage of their native duchy of Normandy. ‡ This vile remain of ancient barbarism, and foul disgrace of the legal polity of our ancestors, has long ceased to exist in our island.

As the general changes introduced by the conqueror must have affected the inhabitants of Lynn, in common with the rest of their countrymen, the above sketch of them became necessary, in order to give the reader some idea of the state of things here at and subsequent to the conquest. Before and at that period, as has been already observed, Lynn and its neighbourhood formed part of the possessions of Harold, of Stigand archbishop of Canterbury, and of Ailmar bishop of Elmham. All

† Blackstone, iv, 410.

‡ Ibid, 411.

the possessions of the former, of course were forfeited by the conquest. Those of the two others soon followed; for being both Anglo-Saxons, (or Englishmen,) and deemed inimical to the Norman succession, they were both expelled, and their sees filled by foreigners. Ailmar's power and possessions here were in right of his see, and of his lordship of Gaywode, which had been long attached to that see: those of Stigand were in his own right, or that of his lordship of Rising, and that of the hundred of Freebridge, which he held, (as well as the lordship of the hundred of Smithdon, and many other lordships,) as a lay fee. His possessions in these parts were bestowed by the conqueror on his half brother Odo, bishop of Bayeux, in Normandy, whom he created Earl of Kent. On his rebellion afterward against William Rufus, he was deprived of them, and they were bestowed on William de Albini, that king's butler, whose son, of the same names, was created Earl of Sussex. [of this more may be seen in the account of Castle Rising.]—Ailmar's possessions here went to his successor Arfast or Herfast, who removed the see from Elmham to Thetford, in whose successors they continued for many generations.

Most, if not all the great gentry of England, in these parts, and throughout the whole kingdom, at or within a few years after the conquest, were deprived of their power, stript of their possessions, and completely humbled. Great numbers of them lost their lives under the charge of treason, sedition, or other crimes. Those who escaped with their lives were reduced to pov-



erty, and obliged to occupy such humble stations as they could not one day have thought of without disdain. \* This memorable revolution, (as such revolutions mostly do,) chiefly affected the higher orders. It affected them, indeed, with a vengeance. The middle classes seem to have felt but little of it, at least compared with their superiors. The lower orders felt it still less, or, perhaps, not at all. They were *slaves* before, and so they continued for several ages after, seemingly without any material change. Nor does their hard condition appear to have been at all ameliorated till after the civil wars broke out between the rival houses of York and Lancaster. The fatal effects of those wars in reducing the numbers of each party, obliged the leaders (as has been before observed) to turn their attention to the lower orders, that is to the real *slaves*, great numbers of whom were then emancipated, to fill up the thinned and reduced ranks of their respective armies. And this seems to have been the only good that attended those bloody and destructive wars. It certainly proved of great national benefit, although, like the reformation of Harry VIII, it sprung from no virtuous or honourable motive. The proverb says, It is an ill wind that blows no good; and it may be very safely said, that seldom, if ever, have any calamitous occurrences been known, but what have been productive of some real benefit. This, doubtless, is owing to the overruling hand of providence, and ought to be acknowledged as such.

\* Not a few of the most high-spirited and warlike withdrew into foreign parts; some sailed to the mediterranean, and found at Constantinople a ready protector in the emperor of the east, who united them

But though the manumission of great numbers of English slaves took place during those bloody and fatal wars, and also in consequence of the politic and wise measures adopted by Henry VII. Yet it does not appear to have been fully or universally effected, or that slavery was then totally eradicated in England. We find that there were here some slaves in the reign of Henry VIII. and of Edward VI. and even of Elizabeth: † and it may be doubtful, if they had entirely ceased to exist here before the reign of Charles I. and the civil war. They abounded in the parts about Lynn for a very long period; but whether as late as in some other parts of the kingdom is rather uncertain.\*—In talking and boasting of our great charter, and of the unwearied and undaunted exertions of our ancient barons and patriots to obtain and enforce it, and how careful they were on every occasion to maintain inviolate the rights and liberties of the people of England, we are seldom aware that a great part of the nation was all the while in actual slavery, and not a soul among the whole host of contemporary patriots and redoubtable zealots for freedom, ever once thinking of pleading their cause, or commiserating their sufferings! So also in more recent times have we been congratulating ourselves on our national virtue and ardent love of liberty and justice, while we were every year dragging thousands and tens of thousands of the poor Africans into west-indian slavery!!

to the Barangi, or battle-ax guards, as some of their countrymen had been long before. [see Andrews, vol. 1.]

† Blackstone, vol. 1. Robinson's Sermon on Slavery, and appendix: Sullivan's Lectures, 258.

\* It has been suggested that some vestiges of our ancient vassalage

## CHAP. II.



Further remarks on the revolutionary effects of the conquest throughout the whole kingdom as well as at Lynn—Catalogue of bishops who formerly bore rule in this Town.

The mighty change effected in this country by the conquest must have been felt at Lynn in common with all other places of a similar description. The great and opulent were doubtless the people who felt it most. \* As to the middle classes, (if such there were that might properly be so denominated,) it must have affected them much less, and the lower orders very little, or perhaps, not at all. The latter were all *slaves* before, and most unfeelingly treated by their masters and proprietors;

is discoverable still in the abject state of the bulk of those miscalled *freemen*, nine out of ten of whom, perhaps, have no will of their own in the choice of representatives, but implicitly act under the direction of the modern masters of the town.—The author, however, does not mean to give the name of *slave-holders* to the two families that now nominate, appoint, return, or send our members to parliament.

\* The author hopes the reader will excuse the repetition of this topic: he wishes all the different orders of the community may be convinced that they are brethren, and that those of the higher orders may possess the proper feelings towards their inferiors, even of the very lowest degrees, who though they have not so much at stake in these perilous times, are yet of the very same species with themselves, and so must be entitled to their tender and fraternal attentions.



and they could but be slaves still; nor is it likely that they met with worse treatment from their new masters. What might not be hoped from the virtue or justice of the Normans, might yet be expected from their policy; for in that quality they seem not to have been deficient; and it may be reasonably supposed that it would induce them to use the numerous slaves they found here no worse than they had been used by their former proprietors. Thus a great part of the nation, and perhaps the greatest part of it, might not be so very materially affected, or injured, by the Norman conquest, as some would be apt to imagine—if indeed it did not prove, on the whole, a benefit rather than detriment to them. \*

## 2 U

\* The same seems also to have been the case in the recent continental conquests and changes: the lower orders and bulk of the people appear to be gainers rather than losers by those events: they were so burdened and oppressed by the old governments, without any hope of redress, or the least prospect of melioration, that they became at last quite regardless who should be their rulers, and rather hailed than deprecated the French emperor's successes and triumphs; believing, it seems, that, if he became their master, their condition, as it could not well be worse, would or might probably be better than what it then was become under their own native princes, who treated them, not as men, or beings of the same species with themselves, but rather as beasts of burden, made only for their use and service; and who were oftentimes disposed of by them and sold like other cattle. Such was the abject and degraded state of the lower classes and great body of the people in most of the regular and old established governments of Europe, before the French revolution. Had the rulers been wise enough afterwards to conciliate the good will and esteem, and secure the attachment of the people, by holding out and granting to them what would be worth contending for, the French had never been able to over-run every country and overturn every government as they have done. Emancipating the people, and admitting them to the enjoyment of real freedom, would render them a different race of men, capable of effectually defending their country; and repelling any hostile attack or invasion. But the statesmen, directors, and managers of the old governments are not, it seems, to be convinced of these obvious, salutary, and important

We must not however imagine or suppose that this revolution bore any resemblance to that which took place in this country above six hundred years afterwards, and which has been justly the fond and proud boast of our countrymen ever since. They were scarcely in any thing alike, except in the names of their respective authors. But William of Normandy must not be compared with William of Nassau; for they were two men of very different and opposite characters: the former came over to subdue and enslave the nation, the latter came as the champion and guardian of its rights and its freedom—one came to rob and destroy, the other to succour and to save—one merited the detestation and execration, the other the esteem, the gratitude, and the benediction of mankind.

Of all the English grandees, who were ruined by the conquest, none were more completely undone than the three great proprietors and lords of Lynn. One of them as has been already observed, was king *Harold*: of his downfall we need say no more. The other two were archbishop *Stigand*, and his brother, bishop *Ailmar*. The former seems to have been the elder brother and

truths. Instead of adopting such a plan, they have too plainly manifested a disposition to augment rather than diminish the burdens and sufferings of the people. The consequence was natural, and what might have been expected. But the managers of the old institutions have not yet begun to learn wisdom from observation and experience—Even the pretended patriots of *Spain*, who have made such fuss about their national liberty and independence, have shewn as much reluctance as the rest, to ease the burdens of the people, or ameliorate the condition of the great body of the nation: and as they seem bent upon perpetuating the old tyranny, and unwilling to avail themselves of the only step that would give their resistance any chance of success, their miscarriage and downfall ought to be viewed without regret.

head of the family, and was probably of noble birth, and of Danish extraction, as the bulk of his vast possessions lay in East Anglia. Carte says, that it appears from the Domesday book, that he had the best estate of any man in England; except Harold and Edwin; there can be little doubt therefore of his being the head of one of the first families in the kingdom. He was lord of Rising, and of the Hundreds of Freebridge and Smithdon, and also, of divers other extensive districts. He is represented as a man of no great learning, but of eminent natural parts, improved by reflection, exercise, and experience, and directed by a clear head and solid judgment. He had the reputation of being endowed with uncommon capacity for business; and we also hear that he was a person of very great weight and power in the country, of which no doubt can be entertained when his immense wealth is considered, and the vast influence arising from both his temporal and spiritual dignities. That such a man should be marked out as one of the victims of the Norman revolution, was naturally to be expected: his being an Englishman, and so very opulent and powerful, were sufficient temptations to sacrifice him. But he seems to have conducted himself so warily at that critical juncture, that the Conqueror for sometime appeared at a loss how to proceed against him. At last some frivolous or pretended ecclesiastical misdemeanor was found out, for which he was deprived of his spiritual dignity, under the sanction of the papal authority, by two popish legates, at a council held at Winchester in 1070. This appeared a hard and severe measure:



but William, as a politic prince, laid the whole blame or responsibility of it on the then Pontiff, Alexander II: Yet he immediately seized on Stigand's vast estates in East Anglia and elsewhere, and confined him in prison on a very scanty allowance, where it is said he died, of want, in the course of the same year, and so did not long survive his disgrace, or rather his downfall. His great possessions, in and about Lynn, the Conqueror bestowed on his half brother Odo, bishop of Baieux, in Normandy, whom he created Earl of Kent, and who then became one of the new masters and lords of Lynn. \*

Stigand's brother, bishop Ailmar, who had still greater power in this town, is supposed to have been deprived at the same time, and by the same council. It is likely that he too was then immured in a prison, and never released from it to his dying day. Such has often been the fate of men who had attained the highest honours and preferments among their countrymen.—Ailmar was succeeded in the see of Elmham, and in his jurisdiction and possessions at Gaywood and Lynn, by Herfast, one of the conqueror's chaplains, as Rapin says.—Here it may not be improper, or unacceptable to the reader, to subjoin a List of the names of all the bishops that preceded and succeeded Ailmar, as masters and lords of Lynn, from Felix the Burgundian, first bishop of the East Angles, to Richard Nykke, or Nix, 31st. bishop of Norwich, † who surrendered into the hands of Henry VIII. his authority or dominion over this town, when

\* See Carte, and Parkin; also Beauties of England, vol. xi.

† The business was at least acceded to by bishop Nykke, but the surrender seems to have been made by his successor bishop Rugg.

the name of it was changed from *Bishop's LYNN* to *King's LYNN*, which it has retained ever since.— Those bishops were,

1. *FELIX the Burgundian*. He was the apostle of the East Angles, among whom his ministry was attended with eminent success, and issued in the conversion of the whole nation: schools were consequently instituted, and numerous places of worship erected throughout the whole country. He was consecrated their bishop in 630, and fixed his seat first, it seems, at *Soham* in Cambridgeshire, and then at *Silthestow*. afterwards called *Domnoc*, and since *Dunwich*, in Suffolk. He has been represented as very learned and pious. The fame of his uncommon sanctity was so great, that after his death, which happened in 647, he was canonized as a saint, and his festival stands on the 8th of March, in the Romish calendar. (See more of him above at p. 242.)—His immediate successor was *THOMAS*, who had been trained up under the famous *Paulinus* archbishop of York, to whom he had been appointed deacon. On the expulsion of that metropolitan from his see, Thomas served the same office under Felix, till his death. After presiding five years he died, in 653, and was succeeded by *BONIFACE*, who also sometimes goes by other names. He was a native of Kent, a priest of Canterbury, whose archbishop consecrated him, in 653; and dying in 659, he was succeeded by *BISUS*, or *Bosa*, who was consecrated by Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury. In his time the diocese was divided into two sees, one of which remained at

Dunwich, and the other was fixed at *North Elmham*, in Norfolk, among whose possessions the demesne or lordship of Lynn and Gaywood was included.—The bishops of Elmham, according to the best account we have met with, were the following,

1. *BEDWINUS*, or *Baldwinus*. He has been spoken highly, of as a man of profound learning and exemplary virtue, and author of numerous works (now lost) which confirmed many in the christian faith. 2. *NORTHERTUS*, or *Northbert*, succeeded sometime after 679.—(3) *HEDULACUS*, or *Hadulac*, filled this see in 731; when Bede completed his ecclesiastical History.—(4.) *EDELFRIDUS*, or *Ethelfrith*,—(5.) *LAMFERTHUS*, or *Lameferd*.—(6.) *ATHELWALFUS*, or *Ethelwolph*, occupied this see in 811.—(7.) *ULFERTUS*, or *Alberth*: said to attend at the council of Cloveshoe, in Berks, where King Offa proposed erecting a new bishopric at *Lichfield*.—(8.) *SIBBA*, or *Sibban*: he sat in 816.—(9.) *HUNFERTH*, or *Hunferd*: was living in 824.—(10.) *HUMBERT*, or *Humbrit*: it was he who crowned king Edmund, or St. Edmund, in 856, with whom he perished in 870, or 871, in opposing the Danes. He too was canonized—(11.) *WYBRED*, *Wyred*, or *Wilbred*: He was set over the two sees of Dunwich and Elmham, which occasioned their being then reunited: the seat was fixed at Elmham.

*Bishops of Elmham after the union of the sees.*—(1.) *THEODRED I.* He is reported to have been an eye witness of St. Edmund's corpse being found uncorrupt, 70 or 80 years after his death.—(2.) *THEODRED, II.* suc.



named the *Good*: He was first bishop of London, and then of Elmham; both of which he held till he died, sometime after 962.—(3.) *ATHULF*, or *Adulf*: succeeded in 966; or, as some think, earlier.—(4.) *ALFRIC* or *Alfrid*: was one of those who signed and confirmed king Edgar's charter to the abbey of Croyland. He died in 975, at the close of Edgar's reign.—(5.) *ATHELSTAN*, *Edelstane*, or *Elstane*: He was consecrated the latter part of 975.—(6) *St. ALGARE*, or *Algar*: he had been Confessor to St. Dunstan archbishop of Canterbury, and promoted to this see in 1012. He afterwards resigned, and retired among the monks of Ely, where he died in 1021.—(7.) *ALFWIN*, or *Elfwyn*, succeeded the same year. He had been keeper or guardian of the body or remains of St. Edmund, and afterwards removed the same from Bury to London. He was also a violent stickler for the monks, or *Regulars*, in their furious squabbles with the *Seculars*. He resigned in 1032. (8.) *ALFRIC II.* succeeded, and died in 1038; and was succeeded by —(9.) *ALFRIC III.* surnamed the *Little*, who is said to die in 1139 \*. (10.) *STIGAND*; (afterwards archbishop) he had been chaplain to king Harold Harefoot; but having obtained this see by simony, which his vast wealth would enable him easily to do, he was afterwards ejected by king Hardicanute, in 1040.—(11.) *GRINKETEL*: he held it in commendam with the bishopric of the *South-Saxons*, during the rest of Hardicanute's reign. Under the Confessor, Stigand was restored to favour, and promoted to Winchester, and last

\* It must be a mistake, and should no doubt be 1039; so that he filled the see but one year.—See *Beauties of England*, as before.

to Canterbury.—12. EGELMAR, *Ailmar*, or *Almar*: of whom an account has been given already, as well as of his brother Stigand.—(13.) ARFAST, or *Herfast*, chaplain to the Conqueror. He succeeded at Easter, 1070. In compliance with an order of a council held by *Lanfranc*, that all episcopal sees should be removed from villages to the most eminent cities or towns in the respective dioceses, Herfast translated the see of Elmham to *Thetford*. He was by birth a Norman, in great favour with the Conqueror, and chancellor of England. He died in 1084; and in 1085 was succeeded by (14.) WILLIAM GALSAGUS, *de Bellafago*, or *Beaufo*. He also was one of the Conqueror's favourites, had been his chaplain, and became chancellor of England. He was, like most of that monarch's great favourites, a person of immense wealth; which at his death, in 1091, was, by his will, divided between his family and see: and this must have contributed not a little to augment the large possessions that were formerly attached to this bishopric. In his time the celebrated survey, called *Domesday*, was made, in which, at folio 145, is contained an enumeration of the estates then belonging to the bishopric; and at folio 148, is an account of the lands of the said bishop, either in fee or inheritance. As many of the latter were bequeathed to the bishopric, the revenues of the see at that period may nearly be ascertained. All these were alienated in the exchange made by Henry VIII. \* — After this bishop's death the see was removed from Thetford to Norwich.

\* See *Beauties of England*, vol. xi, where a fuller account is given of some of these bishops.

*Bishops of Norwich.*—I. HERBERT LOZINGA, who having, through the favour of Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, obtained, by grant and purchase, certain lands, called *Cowholm*, commenced the execution of his favourite plan of building a magnificent cathedral, the first stone of which was laid by him in 1096. He erected a palace also for his residence, on the north side, and a monastery on the south side, which he furnished with 60 monks, all which doings were sanctioned by Pope Paschal II. Herbert was also abbot of Ramsey, and lord Chancellor of England; and moreover a most notorious simoniac, for which the pope imposed upon him some heavy penances, in the doing of which he very notably acquitted himself, and gave good proof how well he was cut out for that kind of business.—Besides the large edifices he erected at Norwich, he also built the two great churches at Yarmouth and Lynn; the latter he dedicated to *St. Margaret the Virgin*, or, as some say, to *St. Mary Magdalen*, *St. Margaret*; and *all the maiden saints*. A priory was also built by him on the south side of this church. These he is said to have undertaken *at the request* of the people of Lynn; and yet it seems as if those same people were not otherwise very forward in their encouragements to him; for he was obliged to have recourse to a very ungraceful expedient in order to induce them to hasten their contributions:—to all who would subscribe or contribute towards these [erect]ions he offered and granted an indulgence, for forty days; † or, in other words, a *Licence* to commit with

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† Armstrong's History of Norfolk, vol. 1. p. 206.



impunity any species of wickedness, or all manner of sin and villany, for the space of *forty days*! It is supposed that this expedient fully answered the bishop's purpose; for the buildings were soon finished, in a style of superior magnificence. It reflects no credit on the memory of our townsmen of that day, that in order to do some good, or contribute liberally towards the erection of religious edifices in the town, they must be indulged with a licence to commit all manner of crimes. It shews that they were much more attached to evil than good, and liked sin far better than holiness. How much the present population of Lynn excels them, is a question that will not here be discussed.—Bishop Herbert died in 1119. and was buried before the high altar of his new cathedral.

2. EBORARD, or *Everard*, succeeded Herbert, after a vacancy of almost three years. In his time the Jews, as we are told, crucified a boy, named William, who being considered a martyr, and canonized, brought no small gains to the church, by the numerous pilgrimages and offerings made annually on this occasion. Though the truth of this shocking crucifixion story seems more than doubtful, yet the monks managed to procure it general belief, and to get the poor boy (real or fictitious) canonized, under the name of *Saint William*. Their main object no doubt was to bring grist to the mill; and as that end was amply obtained, it may be said that they received their reward, and did not labour (or rather invent the tale) in vain. This bishop was the founder of the hospital and church of St. Paul in Norwich; and a

great benefactor to the monastery which had been endowed by his predecessor. He was deposed, or resigned about 1146, and died at Fountian's Abbey in Yorkshire, in 1149, and was succeeded by

3. WILLIAM TURBUS, or *Turbeville*. He was a great stickler for *Becket*, whose influence, even while in disgrace and exile, drove him sometimes to unwarrantable and perilous lengths; especially when he excommunicated the bishop of London, the Earl of Norfolk and some other nobles, who were disliked by that proud prelate. He died in 1174, and was succeeded the next year, by—4. JOHN OF OXFORD, who was very differently affected towards *Becket*, and took part with the king against him, by which he greatly ingratiated himself with his sovereign; who being desirous of having the laws more strictly executed, and a more impartial administration of justice enforced, appointed him, together with the bishops of Ely and Winchester, his three principal justices for the purpose. He built Trinity Church at Ipswich, repaired the damages his cathedral had sustained by fire, in the time of his predecessor, and was a great benefactor to the episcopal convent at Norwich. He died in June 1200, and was succeeded by

5. JOHN DE GREY, who was promoted to the see by that great and memorable patron of Lynn, *King JOHN*, with whom he appears to have been in very high favour, and from whom he procured the liberties of Magna Charta for his diocese. He also obtained

from that monarch a charter to make his town of Lynn a free borough, which was dated at Lutgershall, Sept. 14. 1204, the 6th year of that reign. This was the first of the Lynn charters. These concessions the king was induced to grant, as it is said, either to obtain favours, or in return for some he had received. The wealth of this prelate is reported to have been of great service to the sovereign in his troubles; and for various loans he had obtained, he pledged to the bishop his *regalia*, viz. his great crown, the surcoat, cloak, sandals, gloves, spurs, &c. This bishop built the palace of Gaywood, and so seems to have resided pretty much here, and may be supposed to have acquired among the inhabitants a good portion of popularity. We are also told that he confirmed to the monks of Norwich our church of *St. Margaret*, and the chapels of *St. James* and *St. Nicholas*, and the church of *Mintling*, together with the *tithes* of *Gaywood*, &c. This bishop died at Poictou, in 1214: after which the see was vacant seven years; when

6. PANDULPHUS, an *Italian*, was consecrated in 1222. He had been sent to England as legate by the pope, on account of the deposition of archbishop Langton by king John. While at Rome, to have his election to this see confirmed, on his representing that it was greatly in debt, (whether true or false, we know not,) he obtained a grant of the whole *first fruits* of the clergy in his diocese, for himself and successors; which thenceforth became attached to those prelates, till the time of Henry VIII, and must have considerably augmented



the episcopal revenues. He died in Italy, in 1226; but his remains were brought to England for interment, and buried in his cathedral.—7. THOMAS DE BLANDEVILL succeeded him, and died in 1236, when—8. RALFO succeeded, and died the next year; of whom as well as the former, nothing remarkable is known to be recorded. His successor was

9. WILLIAM DE RALLEIGH, who obtained the bishopric after three years contesting his right. He granted, we are told, an indulgence of twenty days pardon, to all in his diocese who would contribute towards the building of St. Paul's in London. Hence it appears, as well as from the case of Herbert Lozinga, above noticed, that *bishops*, as well as *popes*, in those times, assumed the power of giving a licence to sin with impunity. They must have been rare teachers of morality, who could pretend to promote good works by allowing the people, for a limited time, to run into all possible excesses of riot and evil doing:—and, on the other hand, their intellects must have been in a most unenviable and degraded state, who could accede to the preposterous proposals of such instructors, or patiently listen to such shameless representations. The doctrine of indulgences was afterwards made good use of by Luther and his coadjutors, in their successful struggle against the papal tyranny.—Bishop Raleigh was translated to Winchester, where he died, soon after his induction. He was succeeded by

10. WALTER DE SUTHFIELD, or *Suffield*, who was consecrated in 1224. He obtained for the bishop-

ric a charter of *free warren* to himself and successors. So we may presume that he was himself a *sportsman*. By the command of Pope Innocent, he drew up a general and particular valuation of all the ecclesiastical revenues in the kingdom; which, after receiving the papal confirmation, was called the *Norwich-Inquest*; and subsequently became the ratio of clerical taxation. He erected and endowed the Hospital of St. Giles, in Norwich, for poor pilgrims, and died in 1257. He was succeeded the next year by—11. SIMON DE WAL-TONE, who died in 1265; and was succeeded the same year by—12. ROGER DE SKERNING, in whose time several dreadful affrays happened between the citizens of Norwich and the monks, in one of which the cathedral was burnt. This bishop died in 1278; and was succeeded the same year by—13. WILLIAM MIDDLE-TON. The cathedral being partially repaired, he was enthroned at Norwich; and he rededicated the church, in presence of the king and queen and principal nobility, who were assembled on the occasion. He died in 1288; whose successor was

14. RALPH DE WALPOLE, a Marshland man, it seems, and ancestor of the present noble family of the *Walpoles*. He was translated to Ely, in 1299, and his successor at Norwich was—15. JOHN SALMON, or *Salomon*. Enlarging or rebuilding the palace at Norwich, and founding the Charnel-house, now the free school, are among the principal works ascribed to him. He died in 1325, and his successor was—16. ROBERT DE BALDOCK, who resigned shortly after, and was succeeded

by—17. WILLIAM DE AYRMINNE, who employed himself in enclosing his palace, cathedral, &c. with stone walls, and fortifying them with embattled parapets. He died in 1336; and had for his successor—18. THOMAS HEMENHALE, who soon resigned this see, and accepted that of Worcester in lieu of it. Then succeeded—19. ANTHONY DE BECK, a man of the most imperious and turbulent temper, who had terrible quarrels with the monks, by whose instigation, as it was thought, he was poisoned by his own servants, at his seat of Hevingham, in 1343. His successor was

20, WILLIAM BATEMAN, dean of Lincoln. He was a great benefactor to the nunnery of Flixton in South Elmham, and gave the nuns a body of statutes for their regulation; and, in 1347 founded *Trinity Hall* in Cambridge, for the express purpose of supplying his diocese with persons properly qualified for the discharge of the duties of parochial cures. He died in 1354, at Avignon, while on an embassy to the pope. This prelate was a native of Norwich, but spent much of his time abroad, and chiefly at Rome, till the pope promoted him to this bishopric. So great was his interest with his holiness, that he also obtained for himself and successors, the first fruits, as we are told, of all vacant livings within his diocese, which occasioned, it seems, frequent disputes between him and his clergy. But the clergy were not likely to gain much by disputing with him, for he is represented as “a stout defender of his rights, and one who would not suffer himself to be injured or imposed upon, or his dignity insulted, by any one.” In proof of



which, the following anecdote has been related of him by some of our historians:—"Lord Morley, having killed some of the bishop's deer, infringed upon his manors; and abused his servants who opposed him, was obliged to do penance by walking through the streets of the city with a wax candle of six pounds weight in his hand, and kneel down before the bishop, in the cathedral, and ask his pardon, although the king had sent an express order to the contrary."—From this anecdote we may safely infer, that this prelate governed his slaves and vassals, the inhabitants of Lynn, with despotic sway. It is said that there was in his time such a dreadful plague in England, and throughout Europe, as scarcely left a tenth part of the inhabitants living; and that it appears from the Chronicle of Norwich, that from the first of January to the first of July 1348—9, 57374 persons, besides ecclesiastics and beggars, died in Norfolk alone: We cannot learn how many of them were of the town of Lynn.—A circumstance that seems to corroborate this extraordinary mortality is, that this bishop instituted and collated 850 persons to benefices vacant at this time. \* His successor was —21. THOMAS PERCY, youngest brother of the Earl of Northumberland, though but twenty-two years of age. After erecting the steeple of the cathedral, which had been blown down by a violent wind, and repairing the choir, which had been much damaged, he died, in 1369. The next year he was succeeded by

22. HENRY SPENCER, or *Le Spencer*, a prebendary

\* See Tour of Norfolk, p. 180: also Beauties of England as before.

of Salisbury. He was consecrated in March 1370, *by the pope in person*, which probably contributed not a little to cherish that self importance and haughtiness for which he was so remarkable. In an aid granted through the kingdom to the king's use, this prelate certified for his diocese, that it contained, in Norfolk 806 parishes, and in Suffolk 515; and each county was accordingly rated. He took a most active part, at the commencement of what is called *the grand Schism*, in the memorable warfare between pope *Urban* and his competitor pope *Clement*: for there were then two popes; two infallible heads of the catholic church! and each reviling and damning the other without mercy, and most bloodily seeking his destruction!! Bishop Spencer was on the side of pope *Urban*, with whom he was in very high favour. In 1383 that pontiff published a bull, in which he called upon all who had any regard for religion, to exert themselves in its defence, by taking up arms for him, against his rival *Clement* and his adherents; promising at the same time, for the encouragement of all who would volunteer in this meritorious service, the same *pardons* and *indulgences* as had been usually granted to those who had engaged, or lost their lives, in the great eastern crusades, or holy wars. \* This

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\* Pope *Urban* promised *the full remission of all their sins*, not only to every one who crossed the seas in that quarrel, and personally engaged in that bloody crusade against the other pope and his adherents, but also to all who would engage to pay any number of able soldiers employed on the occasion, and even to all such as would advance any part of their substance to the general (bp. Spencer,) towards defraying the expences of the expedition. The pope's absolution, pronounced by the said episcopal commander in chief, was expressed as follows—"By the authority apostolical, to me in this behalf committed, We absolve

papal bull met with no small success in England, owing perhaps to France being on the side of pope Clement, and to Urban's choosing an English ecclesiastic for his general. This was our bishop Spencer, "a young and stout prelate (says Fox) much fitter for the camping cure than for the peaceable church of Christ."—A most dashing and bouncing high priest he certainly was; of which he gave repeated and abundant proofs, both at home and abroad. This right reverend warrior, and champion of holy church, (at least, of Urban's portion or moiety of it) having obtained an aid or subsidy, of the English parliament, set out upon his continental expedition against the Clementines at the head of 50,000 foot and 2,000 horse: but he did not bring back quite so many. \* Our general with his furious crusaders, after they had landed at Calais, to shew their strict regard for propriety and consistency, turned their arms against Flanders; a country that was not favourable to Clement, but had actually declared for Urban. After ravaging the country, taking divers towns, and defeating the Flemish force which had attempted to oppose them, an effectual stop was put to their career, by the French king, Charles VI. at the head of a powerful army. In short

thee A. B. from all thy sins confessed with thy mouth, and being contrite with thy heart, and whereof thou wouldst be confessed, if they came into thy memory: and we grant unto thee plenary remission of all manner of sins, and we promise unto thee thy part of the reward of all just men, and of everlasting salvation. And as many privileges as are granted unto them that go to fight for the Holy Land, we grant unto thee; and of all the prayers and benefits of the church, the universal synod, as also of the holy catholic church we make thee partaker."—(See Fox, Vol. I.)

\* There were doubtless many Lynn people in that army; the general being lord of this town.



the expedition ended disgracefully, as it deserved, and not very unlike certain expeditions to Flanders and Holland in modern times. The great general, bishop Spencer, at his return, found himself somewhat in disgrace; in which he proved more ill-fated than our modern Yorks and Chathams. The king ordered the temporalities of his see to be seized, and several of his officers to be imprisoned. In a year or two, however, his temporalities were restored, and he probably regained the royal favour.—He lived in great splendor, and had divers sumptuous palaces, among which was that at Norwich, another at South Helingham, and another, supposed to be one of the chief of them, at Gaywood by Lynn, the inhabitants of which town had ample experience of his imperious and turbulent spirit. Being one time in town with his retinue, he quarrelled in the street with the mayor (who was supported by the townsmen) on some point of frivolous etiquette. From words the parties came to blows, and a very serious battle ensued, which terminated in the total defeat of the haughty prelate and his company, who were all furiously driven out of town, many of them sorely bruised and wounded. This turbulent high priest afterwards bent his rage against the poor *Lollards*, and appeared among the first to proceed against them upon the law *De hæretico Comburendo*. He prosecuted *William Sawtre*, minister of St. Margaret's at Lynn, who at first recanted, and afterwards became minister of St. Osith in London, where he relapsed, and was the first that suffered under the above law. This bishop also afterwards

persecuted *Sir Thomas Erpingham* at Norwich, and as a penance, for favouring Lollardism, enjoined him to build the *gate*, at the entrance of the college precinct, which still goes by his name. Bishop Spencer died in 1406, and was, it seems, the first prelate who quartered the episcopal arms with his own. His successor was

23. ALEXANDER DE TOTINGTON, who, though immediately elected, was not admitted to his spiritualities till the following year. Some of his manor-houses and palaces having fallen into decay, through the negligence of his predecessors, he is said to have spent large sums in repairing and beautifying them, which constituted, apparently, his most meritorious and memorable deeds. He died in 1413, and was succeeded by—24. RICHARD DE COURTNEY, chancellor of Oxford, who died suddenly, about two years after, at the siege of Harfleur; from which it would seem that he was a prelate that delighted in war, or another of our fighting bishops, who, at the best, are but unamiable characters. He was succeeded, in 1416, by

25. JOHN DE WAKERYNG, archdeacon of Canterbury, who was confirmed by the *archbishop*; which unusual circumstance was owing to the ecclesiastical anarchy still existing, occasioned by the continuance of the grand schism, which was then at its height. During that period there always were *two* popes, but they were now *three*, and each preferring a legal claim to the papal chair, as the lineal descendant of St Peter! Three contemporary popes exhibited an unusual and queer spectacle, and would naturally suggest the idea of

three heads of the church: and a church, or any thing else, with *three heads* may pretty fairly be deemed a *monster*. Even the protestant church of England, however, has had before now *two* heads; one in London, and the other at St. Germans; which ought to deter its members from bearing too hard on the church of Rome in the above case. Bishop Wakeryng is said to have made considerable improvements in and about his cathedral; which seems to have been among his most praiseworthy performances. It appears that he died in 1425.

Here it may be proper to observe, that in this bishop's time, and that of some of his predecessors, as well as of his immediate successor, the tranquillity of the town of Lynn appears to have been exceedingly disturbed by the violence of two contending factions, which kept the town in a continual state of discord and distraction, it seems, for the space of about thirty years: as may be gathered from existing documents, or copies of Letters, of that period, still preserved in a MS. History of Lynn, in the possession of *Mr. Thomas King* of this town. \* From which we discover that those two contending factions were headed by two of the Aldermen of that time; one of whom was *Bartholomy Petipas*, who was *twice* mayor, and the other *John de Wentworth*, who served that office *three times*. The cause and nature of the

\* It is somewhat remarkable, that though both Mackrel and Parkin appear to have made use of that MS. Volume, and the former drew most of his materials from it, for the most part verbatim, yet neither of them take any notice of those letters, which yet form the most curious part of the whole volume.



difference that arose between these opposing parties is not easy to develop. That their animosity was bitter and violent is but too obvious, but its source or ground is involved in no small obscurity.

This however is not the place to enter minutely upon the subject, which shall be resumed in another part of the work. This dire contention seems to have begun in 1403, the 7th of Henry IV. and to have lasted till 1434, the 13th of Henry VI. The first of those years were the 3rd. of Wentworth's mayoralty, between whom and Petipas there evidently existed some serious competition; but whether it was merely a contest for power or superiority in the management of the town, or arose from certain political questions about a reform of abuses, on which the parties disagreed, does not very plainly appear. It is however very well known that questions of a political, as well as theological nature, were then much agitated in different parts of the country, by the enlightened and patriotic disciples of Wickliff, who were anxious to promote every where political as well as ecclesiastical reformation; but that such was actually the case then at Lynn, and the ground of the said disagreement cannot perhaps be positively affirmed. There are indeed some intimations of *insufficient* or *suspicious* persons having for sometime been chosen or found among the 24 Jurats that were here annually elected, in a Letter or injunction from Henry VI, addressed, seemingly, to the mayor and burgesses, and dated November 23. in his 13th year, which may indicate that politics had no small share in the said con-

tention, and the persons alluded to might belong to the advocates of reform, or democrats of that day. But this subject we will now drop, \* and proceed with our episcopal catalogue. John de Wakeryng dying in 1425 was succeeded the following year by

\* The documents or papers above referred to, consist of 1. a Letter from John Wentworth mayor of Lynn to the king (Hen. iv.) dated on St. Martin's day 1403, and complaining of the opposite party, as outrageous persons who committed the most horrid crimes, and proceeded in the most riotous manner against their opponents, with the intent to spoil and rob them of their goods, burn their houses, slay and dismember their persons, &c. It is not the first letter he wrote to his majesty, for he refers to others of anterior date. Those however are lost, or we might possess a more correct knowledge of this business. The *second* of those papers is a Letter from Petipas, then mayor, to some of his friends, complaining of Wentworth and his adherents and *assentaunts* for troubling him in the discharge of his duty, and requiring them "be bille or be mouthe" [by letter or by word of mouth] to acquaint his reverend lord of Norwich [i. e. the bishop] with the affair, and solicit his interference. &c. Its date is 1413, the first of Henry V.—The *third* is from the same, and seemingly to the same, and written, it is presumed, in 1414, the former part of which was the latter part of his 2nd year, for he was then mayor two years successively. The *fourth* was from Thomas Hunt, who became mayor in the autumn of 1415 to Johan Spencer, viscount de Norff. [i. e. the High Sheriff of the county] and is dated "atte Lenn ye tede day of the mone of Juylet, ye yere of ye regne of King Henry ye fyft ye ferth:" which was A. D. 1416. This curious paper complains of Thomas Felwell, goldsmith, who had been indicted for his misdeeds, as an instigator of a *rysing* and *ryot*—also of Thomas Hardell, and Thomas Enemethe. "and very many of the misdoers resorten and drawn again in counsailes to Barth. Petipas in sustenance of his p. tie," &c. It also offers the said Viscount, or high sheriff, a *present of a young He-Bear*, which seems a queer circumstance. But what makes this paper of most importance is its confirming, along with the other documents, the very distracted state of the town at that period.—The *fifth* is addresred "to the lord bishopp of Norwich" (the above John de Wakeryng it seems,) from his owen humblest tenants and devout Bedesmen, the Mayre and good men of his town of Lenne Bishopp," Its date is the 9. of March, the 3rd of Henry V. which seems to answer to A. D. 1415, or 1415—16. and the mayor was probably the above Thomas Hunt.—The *sixth* and last of those papers was a royal injunction or mandate from "Henry

26. WILLIAM ALNWICK, archdeacon of Salisbury, who, having sat ten years, was translated to Lincoln. The principal entrance of the palace is said to have been

(VI.) by the Grace of God king of England and of France and lord of Ireland unto the Mair of the town of Lenne Byshopp;" and relates chiefly, as was before hinted, to some irregularity or neglect in the choice of the 24 Jurats, directing and enjoining that they should be free-men and lawful, and of the most discreet, sufficient, and *least suspicious* persons of the said town; and each of them possessing property in lands and tenements to the amount of C. 8 (i. e. one hundred shillings) a year—equal no doubt to more than 100*l.* a year now: also directing that in case any of the 24 Jurats happened to die in the course of the year, others equally unexceptionable should be immediately chosen in their room, &c.—As a sample of the style and orthography of the magistrates of Lynn 400 years ago, and a specimen of their mode of address to their prelati cal lord and master, we shall here subjoin the mayor and aldermen's Letter to bishop *Wakeryng*.

"Worschipfull Lord and reverent fader in God, we commaund us unto yow, humble thankant yow wt alle oure hertes, of good & graciouse lordship yt. yo han schewed to us before yis tyme prayand to yow of good continunace & revrent fader, for as meche as we han conteyned be John Thornham yor. servt. yt ye are & will be graciouse lord to us, therefor as unknowen men, we wryten to yow in our symple manr. preying yow yt Barth. Petypas, Will Hallyate, Thomas Middleton taylor, Thomas Barrington goldsmyth, Thomas Monethe, Thomas Beckham, John Balders, Thomas Littleport, Thomas Hardell, John Blome, Rich. Baxter, Andrew Fourbe, abide out of yor. towne of lenne unto the tyme of yor. stalling at Norwich, the whiche schalle not be longe be the grace of God, atte which tyme we shalle mete with yow & fulliche declare to yow all manr. of hevynesse ye whiche yai han wrought to us, & yt. to yor. worschipfull person disclosed & fulliche in hye & in lowe, put it in govnançe of yow & of yor counsayll, & for truly sire sithen ye. tyme yt. yai wenten out of ye town of Lenne, of whiche ye shun sone be lord of, be ye grace of God stode never in beter reste & pees than it hath done sithen that tyme, & yet dothe atte this day, & be yor. good governance, these persons above wretyn sett an syde, we tryste in God to have reste & pees for ever more in yor. towne & in our persons ye shal fynd us as lowly tenants as any that longs to yow within yor. lordshippes, & wt. our bodyes & our goodes, be as lowly to yow worschipful and revrend fader in God we preye, ye. holy trinite: keep yow body and soule, & fullfill your desires as ye can yor. self



erected at his expence, and by his arms being united with those of the see, on the west end of the cathedral, he is supposed to have contributed towards the erection of that also.—27. THOMAS BROWN, or *Breus*, succeeded him, being translated hither from Rochester, by Pope Eugenius IV. by bull, dated September 19. 1436. We are told that he left a sum towards the payment of the city tax, and exhibitions for poor scholars, prosecuting their studies in the universities, who might be natives of the diocese: so that he seems one of the better sort of those of his order. He died at Hoxne, in 1445.

—JOHN STANBERY, a carmelite friar, was chosen to succeed him, but never consecrated, owing to papal interference, then at its height. The real successor therefore was—28. WALTER HART, or *Lyhart*, master of Oriel College Oxon, who was appointed by the pope,

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devise. Written at Lenne ye IX day of Marche under ye seall of the office of Mayraltie.

Your owen humblest tenants and devout Bedesmen,

Mayre and good men of your towne of Lenne Bishopp."

In this lowly and abject manner did these humblest tenants and devout beadesmen, the mayor and corporation of Lynn, of that day, approach their high and mighty lord, bishop Wakeing. They were indeed his subjects and vassals, as their predecessors had long been; and they might think that such cringing conduct became them: but some of them would occasionally shew a disposition to kick and resist, as had been the case in bishop *Spencer's* time, and also now, it seems, in the case of *Petipar*, as well as of *Miller*, afterwards, who is said to have gone to law with the bishop and cast him. But, in general, corporations, while they are some of the most unfeeling, relentless, and tyrannical towards their inferiors, are at the same time some of the most abject and obsequious of all men towards their superiors and masters: hardly presuming at any time to have a will of their own. They are as ready to erect statues to bad as to good kings; and the premier, however corrupt or flagitious, is pretty sure of being always their lord chancellor, or keeper of their conscience.

and consecrated February 27 1446. Paving the cathedral; and erecting the elegant carved roof of the nave, where a *hart*, or deer couchant, in sculpture, alluding to his name, is seen in several places, are the works ascribed to him. He died in May 1472, and was succeeded by

29. JAMES GOLDWELL, the Pope's Prothonotary, who was made bishop by papal provision, and consecrated at Rome by pope Sixtus IV. October 4. 1472. He appears to have been a thorough-paced ecclesiastic, and legitimate son of his Holy Father. Before he left Rome, at the time of his consecration, he is said to have obtained of the Pope a *perpetual indulgence*, to repair and ornament the cathedral; by which he was empowered to grant, to all persons who frequented it annually, on Trinity Sunday and Lady-day, *twelve years and forty days* pardon, in lieu of offerings made on the occasion: and having received the sum of 2200 marks, for dilapidation, he finished beautifying the tower; made the elegant stone-fretted roof of the choir; and ornamented the chapels on each side of it; especially that dedicated to the Holy Trinity, in which he was afterwards interred.—We need not wonder that he could do so much, when he was empowered to grant such long indulgences, and such extensive and ample pardons. Wealthy people, who could believe him really possessed of such a power, might be expected to furnish him pretty readily with any sums of money he wanted for his sumptuous buildings and architectural decorations. To such pious frauds and cunning devices, many

of our ecclesiastical structures, throughout the kingdom, owe much, perhaps, of their boasted beauty and magnificence. Sad however must have been the case of this country, when such vile tricks could take, or succeed, even with the most enlightened part of its population; and sadder still must be our case, if we are not yet proof against equally vile and palpable impositions.—Bishop Goldwell died in 1498,\* and the see, on the refusal of *Christopher Urswyke*, was filled by—30. THOMAS JANE, archdeacon of Essex, and Canon of Windsor, who was consecrated in 1499, and died the next year: whose successor was

31. RICHARD NYKKE, or *Nix*, archdeacon of Exeter, who was elected in 1500. He must have been a man of an unamiable and hateful character. Writers unanimously concur to brand his name with the greatest obloquy. Of his vile persecuting spirit no further evidence need be adduced than the fact, that by his sanguinary judgments, *Ayers*, *Bingy*, *Norrice*, and the amiable *Bilney* were consigned to the flames, for only, in a peaceable manner, expressing those sentiments, which, as they were sanctioned by conscience, they had a right to suppose were the dictates of truth. He died January 14. 1535. In his time *Chorepiscopi* were first appointed by act of parliament; their office answering to that of suffragan, which, prior

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\* That year the king and queen, with their eldest of Wales, and Margaret countess of Richmond, the eldest Lynn, and were lodged at the Austin monastery. Mr. Rishton's house now stands. The occurrence we know not.

ance  
to that

son Arthur prince  
king's mother, visit-  
ery, on the site of which  
sion of this royal visit we



period, had been chosen at the discretion of the diocesan. While this bishop bore sway, as master and lord of Lynn, there was among the aldermen here a very remarkable person, whose name was *Thomas Miller*. He was mayor of the town six or seven years, but not six or seven times; for the first time he was in the office for four years successively, viz. 1520 and the three following years. He was mayor again in 1529, and again in 1546, the last of Henry VIII. That he was a man of spirit and intrepidity appears by his contending with his lord, the bishop, about the right of having the sword carried before him, which his lordship, it seems, objected to, and claimed as his own proper and exclusive right and prerogative. Our mayor and the corporation, not satisfied with this, went boldly to law with their lordly master, on the occasion, and carried their cause; which determined and established the point, and the sword has been carried before their worships, the mayors of Lynn, ever since, without any further demur or litigation. It appears indeed that it would have so happened, in no long time after, had the said law-suit, or legal decision not taken place; for the king, in the course of a few years, thought proper to require of this same bishop the relinquishment and surrender of his supremacy, or dominion over Lynn, for such valuable considerations as his majesty, in his princely wisdom, saw fit to grant or allow him, by way of exchange or remuneration. To this his lordship readily acceded; for he must have known the king too well to suppose that it would have been any way safe for him to have done otherwise. But he died soon after, and before the af-

fair was fully concluded. The actual surrender, therefore, and probably under some new arrangements, was left to be executed by his immediate successor, the no less memorable

32. WILLIAM RUGG, or *Reppes*, fortieth abbot of St. Bennet's in Holme, and native of North Repps, in this county, where his father, of both his names, is said to have resided. He had his education at Cambridge, and was fellow of Gonvill Hall in that university. After being abbot of St. Bennet's about six years, he was promoted to this see, by way of recompence, as some seem to think, for the part he had acted among the Cambridge divines, in obtaining from that university the judgment his majesty wished, respecting his marriage with queen Catherine. They might also suppose, that his being a warm and stanch stickler for the king's ecclesiastical supremacy, and influencing those of his convent to subscribe to the same, in 1534, were additional recommendations that contributed to his promotion. But when we consider the hard terms, or humiliating conditions, on which he was to obtain, or hold his episcopal dignity, (that is, by relinquishing the greatest part of the revenue and possessions attached to his see,) it will not be a very easy matter to prove that any favour was intended by this preferment, and much less a recompence or reward for former services: this was certainly very different from Henry's wonted manner of using his favourites, and rewarding his approved servants. But this point is too uninteresting to merit any further discussion.—Abbot Rugg being promoted

to the see of Norwich in 1536, he, by virtue of a private act of parliament, parted with all the lands of his bishopric, except the site of his episcopal palace in Norwich, to the king, by way of exchange for the revenues belonging to the abbey of Holme and priory of Hickling; which last being soon after alienated by him, the whole income, since his time, appertaining to the see of Norwich, has been only the estate of Holme monastery, which his successors still enjoy, according to the purport of the said act, which, continuing unrepealed, gave occasion to bishop Montague, in the time of Charles I. to subscribe himself, in his leases, "*Richard, by divine permission, lord bishop of Norwich, and Head Abbot of St. Benedict's de Hulm.*" The exchange of the lands of the bishopric, for those of the Abbey of St. Benedict's and priory of Hickling, is said to have been made by abbot Rugg some months before his election to the see of Norwich, \* though not before his promotion thither had been predetermined. We are further informed that this prelate alienated from his bishopric, not only the priory of Hickling, but many good manors besides, belonging to the abbey, some by absolute gift, others upon trifling exchanges, and gave long leases, so that, at last, he was unable to maintain the state of the bishopric, and forced to resign, with an annual pension of 200 marks. He seems to have been a singularly improvident and thoughtless prelate, and very different from most of that order, who seldom lose sight of their terrestrial interests, or temporal concerns,

\* See Tour of Norfolk 286, &c. also Beaut. of Engl. as before.



whatever they may do as to those that are of an eternal nature. After having resigned the see for the paltry pittance of 200 marks, or, as some say, 200*l.* per annum, he died in 1550. In allusion to the straits and difficulties to which his manifest and manifold indiscretions had reduced him, one of the members or officers of his household is said to have made the following verses on his resignation:

Poor Will, thou *rugged* art and *ragged* all:

Thy *abbey* cannot bless thee in such fame,

To keep a *pallace* fair and stately hall,

When gone from thence what should maintaine the same.

First pay thy debts, and hence return to *cell*,

And pray the blessed *saint* whom thou dost serve,

That others may maintaine the *pallace* well;

For if thou stayst, we all are like to starve.

The convent, or abbey of St. Benedict's, appears to have been his chief palace, or place of residence, during the whole time of his sustaining the episcopal character: after which it soon went into decay, and ceased to be the residence of his successors; with whom however we have no further concern, as they were no longer the temporal lords and masters of Lynn. Here therefore ends this episcopal catalogue; which exhibits a pretty long list of names, though but few among them appear to have merited the praise and benediction of their contemporaries, or the veneration and imitation of posterity.

## CHAP. III.



State of Lynn previously and subsequently to its becoming a corporate town, or free borough, with general remarks on that event, and on the pregressive state of society in the towns and cities of this country, as well as at Lynn, in those times.

It is difficult to ascertain the exact state of this town, or the nature of its police, and the social condition of its inhabitants, not only before and at the Conquest, but also for a good while after, any further than that its population appears to have then consisted chiefly, if not entirely, of the bishop's slaves or vassals, governed by such agents or officers as he thought proper to appoint, whose administration, as may be reasonably presumed, would not always be of the mildest, or most equitable and unexceptionable description. Had there been now in existence regular and authentic records of the affairs of the town, in those days, we should probably discover that its police, at least the spirit of it, bore but too much resemblance to our present West Indian jurisprudence. Slaves, in those ages, seem to have constituted the bulk of our population; and were, in all probability, the offspring of the lower orders of the original inhabitants, whose lives had been spared, when the Anglo-Saxons

over-run and conquered the country, on condition of submitting to perpetual servitude. Such seems to have been the origin of those slaves of different descriptions which formerly abounded in this country for many ages. These, in country places, were the cultivators of the soil, or tillers of the ground; and in the towns, they were the tradesmen, mechanics, artificers, and labourers. In short, both in the towns and in country places all useful employments were occupied by them. As to their masters, the nobility, gentry, and every description of military men, who constituted the great or main body of reputed freemen, they were all above engaging in any such employments. War and the chase were the only occupations that were deemed worthy of them; and there lay the whole stock or sum of their knowledge and acquirements. Literature of every kind they usually set at nought; scorning to learn so much as to write their own names, as an attainment that would be too degrading for an English gentleman. Under such beings, how unenviable, miserable, and deplorable must have been the condition of the enslaved or unfree part of the community.

Of the original, low, and servile state of the inhabitants of our English, and other European towns, and their progress from thralldom to freedom, no one has perhaps given a juster account than *Dr. Adam Smith*, in the second volume of his celebrated *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. He there observes that the inhabitants of cities and towns, after the



fall of the Roman Empire, were not more favoured than those of the country. “ They consisted, indeed, of a very different order of people from the first inhabitants of the ancient republicks of Greece and Italy. These last were composed chiefly of the proprietors of lands, among whom the public territory was originally divided, and who found it convenient to build their houses in the neighbourhood of one another, and to surround them with a wall, for the sake of common defence. After the fall of the Roman empire, on the contrary, the proprietors of land seem generally to have lived in fortified castles on their own estates, and in the midst of their own tenants and dependants. The towns were chiefly inhabited by tradesmen and mechanics, who seemed in those days to have been servile, or very nearly of servile condition. The privileges which we find granted by ancient charters to the inhabitants of some of the principal towns in Europe, sufficiently shew what they were before these grants. The people to whom it is granted as a privilege, that they might give away their own daughters in marriage without the consent of their lord, that upon their death, their own children, and not their lord, should succeed to their goods, and that they might dispose of their own effects by will, must, before those grants, have been either altogether, or very nearly in the same state of villanage with the occupiers of land in the country. They seem, indeed, to have been a very poor, mean set of people, who used to travel about with their goods from place to place, and from fair to fair, like the hawkers and pedlers of the present times. In all the different countries of Enrope then,

in the same manner as in several of the Tartar governments of Asia at present, taxes used to be levied upon the persons and goods of travellers, when they passed through certain manors, when they went over certain bridges, when they carried about their goods from place to place in a fair, when they erected in it a booth or stall to sell them in. These different taxes were known in England by the names of passage, pontage, lastage, and stallage. Sometimes the king, sometimes a great lord, would grant to particular traders, to such particularly as lived in their own demesnes, a general exemption from such taxes. Such traders, though in other respects of servile condition, were upon this account called Free-traders. They in return usually paid to their protector a sort of annual poll tax. In those days protection was seldom granted without a valuable consideration, and this tax might, perhaps, be considered as compensation for what their patrons might lose by their exemption from other taxes. At first, both those poll-taxes and those exemptions seem to have been altogether personal, and to have affected only particular individuals, during either their lives, or the pleasure of their protectors. In the very imperfect accounts which have been published from Domesday-book, of several of the towns of England, mention is frequently made, sometimes of the tax which particular burghers paid, each of them, either to the king, or to some other great lord, for this sort of protection; and sometimes of the general amount only of all these taxes. ” \*

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\* See Smith's Inquiry, 2. 101. He also observes that how servile se-

“That part of the king’s revenue which arose from such poll-taxes in any particular town, used commonly to be lett in farm, during a term of years for a rent certain, sometimes to the sheriff of the county, and some times to other persons. The burghers themselves frequently got credit enough to be admitted to farm the revenues of this sort which arose from their own town, they becoming jointly and severally answerable for the whole rent.” In return, being allowed to collect it in their own way, and to pay it into the king’s exchequer by the hands of their own bailiff, they would be altogether freed from the insolence of the king’s officers; a circumstance in those days of no small importance.

“At first, the farm of the town was lett to the burghers, in the same manner as it had been to other farmers, for a term of years only. In process of time, however, it seems to have become the general practice to grant it to them in fee, that is for ever, reserving a rent certain, never afterwards to be augmented. The payment having thus become perpetual, the exemptions, in return for which it was made, naturally became perpetual too. Those exemptions, therefore, ceased to be personal, and could not afterwards be considered as belonging to individuals as individuals, but as burgesses of a particular burgh, which, upon this account, was called a Free-burgh, for the same reason that they had been called Free-burghers or Free-traders. Along with this

ever may have been originally the condition of the inhabitants of the towns, they yet arrived at liberty and independence much earlier than the occupiers of land in the country.



grant, the important privileges above mentioned, that they might give away their own daughters in marriage, that their children should succeed them, and that they might dispose of their own effects by will, were generally bestowed upon the burghers of the town to whom it was given. The principal attributes of villanage and slavery being thus taken away from them, they now, at least, became really free in our present sense of the word Freedom.—Nor was this all. They were generally at the same time erected into a commonality, or corporation, with the privilege of having magistrates and a town-council of their own, of making bye-laws for their own government, of building walls for their own defence, and of reducing all their inhabitants under a sort of military discipline, by obliging them to watch and ward; that is, as antiently understood, to guard and defend those walls against all attacks and surprises, by night as well as by day. In England they were generally exempted from suit to the hundred and country courts; and all such pleas as should arise among them, the pleas of the crown excepted, were left to the decision of their own magistrates. ” \*

For the origin of corporate towns, in this country, we are generally referred to the times of which we are now treating, that is, the ages subsequent to the Conquest; and yet it seems to be very evident from the old book called *The Mirrour*, that there existed here some towns of that de-

\* Smith, as before, 104. Among the other principal works that relate to these matters are *Madox Firma Burgi*, and Brady's historical treatise of cities and boroughs.

scription even as early as the days of Alfred: † but they were probably few, and disregarded afterward, if not entirely disannulled; till a good while after the accession and establishment of the Norman dynasty: nor can we learn scarcely any thing of the cause and object of their formation, or the nature and principles of their constitutions. The case is otherwise as to those corporations formed since the Conquest; which seems to apply to all those that now exist in this country: it is not so difficult to find, or make out, how and why they were formed; and it is with them only that we have here any concern. Before they sprung up the feudal system was in its full and utmost vigour; and the power of the country was divided between the sovereign and the barons, or great lords; and the latter were sometimes an over match for the former. As a counter-balance or check to the formidable and enormous power of the barons, the incorporation of the great towns and cities seems chiefly to have been resorted to, or adopted. At least this appears to have been the case as far as any good policy, and not mere caprice, had any share in the business: for justice and humanity, or a desire to enlarge the liberty, and promote the welfare of the people were totally out of the question. These were motives too sublime and godlike to enter into the contemplation of the English kings and courtiers of those days.

But the said measure, whatever might be its cause and object, or the motive for its adoption, appears to have produced very salutary effects: for by forming

† See Political Review for December, 1809.

cities and towns into corporations, and conferring on them the privileges of municipal jurisdiction, the first check was given to the overwhelming evils of the feudal system: and under their influence freedom and independence began to peep forth, from the rigours of slavery, and the miseries of oppression. To be free of any corporation, however, was not then, as at present, merely to enjoy some privilege in trade, or to exercise the right of voting on particular occasions, but it was to be exempt from the intolerable hardships of feudal service; to have the right of disposing both of person and property, and to be governed by laws intended to promote the general good, and not to gratify the ambition and avarice of individuals. “ These laws, however rude and imperfect, tended to afford security to property, and encourage men to habits of industry. Thus commerce, with every ornamental and useful art, began first in corporate bodies to animate society. But in those dark ages force was necessary to defend the claims of industry; and such a force the municipal societies possessed; for their towns were not only defended by walls and gates, vigilantly guarded by the citizens, but oftentimes at the head of their fellow freemen in arms, the mayor, aldermen and other officers, marched forth in firm array, to assert their rights, defend their property, and teach the proudest and most powerful baron, that the humblest freeman was not to be injured with impunity. It was thus the commons learned and proved they were not objects of contempt; nay, that they were beings of the same species as the greatest lords.\*

\* See Monthly Rev. for August 1805, p. 446.



In this country the king is said to be the fountain of honour; and such he was to the incorporated towns and cities. From him they derived their chartered and municipal privileges, and to him they owed their emancipation from their former bondage, or manumission from feudal servitude. Though these royal acts appear to have proceeded from no generous or noble motives, such as the love of justice, or a regard for liberty, but rather from a selfish and sordid policy; yet, as they proved of vast benefit to the inhabitants of these towns and cities, they strongly attached them to the throne, and greatly added to the power and resources of the sovereign. The aversion and contempt manifested by the nobles towards this new body of freemen, tended to promote still further their attachment and subserviency to the court. The lords despised the burghers, whom they considered not only as of a different order, but as a parcel of emancipated slaves, almost of a different species from themselves. "The wealth of the burghers never failed to provoke their envy and indignation, and they plundered them on every occasion without mercy or remorse. The burghers naturally hated and feared the lords. The king hated and feared them too; but, though perhaps he might despise, he had no reason either to hate or fear the burghers. Mutual interest, therefore, disposed them to support the king, and the king to support them against the lords. They were the enemies of his enemies, and it was his interest to render them as secure and independent of those enemies as he could. By granting them magistrates of their own, the privilege of making bye-laws for their own government,

that of building walls for their own defence, and that of reducing all their inhabitants under a sort of military discipline, he gave them all the means of security and independency of the barons, which it was in his power to bestow. Without the establishment of some regular government of this kind, without some authority to to compel their inhabitants to act according to some certain plan or system, no voluntary league of mutual defence could either have afforded them any permanent security, or have enabled them to give the king any permanent support. By granting the farm of their town in fee, he took away from those whom he wished to have for his friends, and, if one may say so, for his allies, all ground of jealousy and suspicion, that he was ever afterwards to oppress them, either by raising the farm rent of their town, or by granting it to some other farmer.\*

The armed force, with which the towns now furnished themselves, must have produced a very material change in the state of the kingdom. This new order of warriors, or trained bands of the towns, seem not to have been inferior to those of the country; and as they could be more readily assembled on any emergency, they are said to have frequently had the advantage in their disputes with the neighbouring lords. In some parts of the continent they became so powerful and successful as to subdue the nobles in their vicinity, and enable the cities to which they belonged to form them-

selves into independent republicks. But in England, the cities and burghs had no opportunity to become entirely independent. They became, however, so considerable, as Dr. Smith observes, that the sovereign could impose no tax upon them, beside the stated farm-rent of the town, without their own consent. They were, therefore, called upon to send deputies to the general assembly of the states of the kingdom, where they might join with the clergy and the barons in granting, upon urgent occasions, some extraordinary aid to the king. Being generally, too, more favourable to his power, their deputies seem, some times, to have been employed by him as a counterbalance, in those assemblies, to the authority of the great lords.\* Hence, as it seems, the origin of the representation of burghs in our parliaments.

However useless or objectionable our modern burghs or corporate towns may be, it must be allowed that they were originally productive of no inconsiderable national advantages. In them, as has been observed by the writer last mentioned, order and good government together with the liberty and security of individuals, were established at a time when the occupiers of land in the country were exposed to every kind of violence. That industry also, which aims at something more than necessary subsistence was found in them before it was commonly practised, or did exist among the country farmers. “If in the hands of a poor cultivator, oppressed with the servitude of villanage, some little

\* Smith, as before, p. 108.



stock should accumulate, he would naturally conceal it, with great care, from his master, to whom it would otherwise have belonged, and take the first opportunity of running away to a town. The law was, at that time, so indulgent to the inhabitants of towns, and so desirous of diminishing the authority of the lords, over those of the country, that if he could conceal himself there, from the pursuit of the lord, for a year, he was free for ever. Whatever stock therefore accumulated in the hands of the industrious part of the inhabitants of the country, naturally took refuge in cities, as the only sanctuaries in which it could be secure to the person that acquired it.”\* Thus it appears the cities and towns were then replenished with inhabitants from the industrious and most valuable part of the population of the country, and not, as is too often the case in our time, from the most idle, profligate, and worthless.

From what has been already said of the motive or policy that seems to have given birth to our burgh-system, it might naturally be expected that those princes, who lived upon the worst terms with their barons, would be the most ready and active promoters of it, and the most liberal in their grants of municipal immunities. This, at least, appears to have been the case: and we find our *king* JOHN, for example, and we may add, his son, and successor, HENRY III. were most munificent benefactors to those towns; of which

Lynn, may be mentioned as one notable instance. This town owes, to those two sovereigns, its political redemption, or elevation to the rank of a corporate town, or free borough. The era of its arriving at this high, and proud distinction, was the 13th century ; whereas it was, before that period, the miserable abode of a horde of slaves, the vassals of the lord bishops of the see in which it is situated.

But though Lynn acquired then the rank and denomination of a free burgh, it does not appear, that it also became possessed of equal freedom from baronial domination, and feudal vassalage, with all the rest of our corporate towns ; or, that it actually arrived at that state or degree of liberty, for a very long while after, even till the reign of *Henry VIII.* about 300 years after it had been first declared a free burgh by king *John* and his successor. The time when it acquired the name of *King's Lynn*, seems, therefore, to be the true era of its actual, and entire liberation from its former feudal incumbrances. Lynn then is a place where the memory of the last Henry ought to be held dear, and where he should be commemorated as one of its best benefactors. These, however, are circumstances, not generally adverted to ; but they seem to be real matters of fact, and may deserve here some elucidation.

King *John*, granting to Lynn its charter of incorporation at the instance of bishop *Grey*, who had so much interest with him, and to whom he had very great obligations, was not likely to attempt to deprive him of

his baronial rights, or supreme power and jurisdiction in this town: nor do we know that the bishop was at all disposed to relinquish the same. We accordingly find an express clause in the royal charter, *saving to the said bishop and his successors, the liberties, &c. which had previously belonged to the bishops of Norwich.* That this was understood as securing to the bishops their former rights and authority in this town, may be inferred from the general conduct of the succeeding prelates for many generations, who seem to have been uniformly striving to retain and perpetuate the said rights and authority, and keep the inhabitants in their original state of subjection to them. Nor did the mayor and corporation appear, at all, disposed to contest the point with their lordships, except in very few instances; as in the time of bishops *Spencer*, *Wakeryng*, and *Nix*, already noticed. There seems, also to have been some stir, of the same sort, made in the time of bishop *Hart*, or *Lyhart*, in the year 1446, and the corporation, probably, complained, or appealed to the king, (Henry VI.) who then visited this town, and seems to have favoured the cause of the corporation; for he is said to have ordered the sword to be carried before the mayor. But the bishop would not long submit to this royal order, for the very next year he had the sword carried before himself, as formerly, the mayor following, as one of his retinue or municipal officers.\*

On the whole, therefore, it seems pretty evident that

\* See Mackrell, 223.



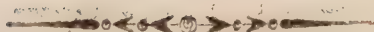
though Lynn became a corporate town, and was declared a free burgh as early as the beginning of the 13th century, yet it was not entirely freed from the temporal jurisdiction of the bishop, and the hard yoke of feudal domination, and so did not attain to equal liberty and independence with the generality of our English boroughs till a good part of the 16th century had elapsed. We accordingly find that the mayor and corporation, in the mean time, or during most part of it, seemed perfectly ready to approve as well as profess themselves the lordly prelate's *humble tenants and devout bedesmen*; giving him the most explicit and solemn assurance, "that he should find in them *as lowly tenants as any that longed to him within his lordships*," and that their *bodies* as well as *goods* were entirely at his service, &c. agreeably to the tenour of the above memorable letter to bishop Wakeryng. \*—We may therefore venture to affirm that this town was, at most, but partially liberated from feudal vassalage, till the period above specified; that is, within these 300 years; before which the *mayors* of Lynn appeared, or might justly be considered, as the bishops' head-men, chief bailiffs, or slave drivers; and the *aldermen* as so many underlings, or petty officers, implicitly executing his lordship's paramount orders or commands.—Though the Charters might sometimes be thought to entitle his worship and his brethren to greater independence and a higher character, yet till then it does not seem that they were enabled to assume their proper dignity and consequence.

\* See above, page 366.

The bishops being so powerful here, took care always to manage so as to thwart and baffle all their attempts. Nor did there seem to be any prospect of their succeeding in obtaining their proper station while the bishop continued to retain a paramount sway and uncontrolled power in the town. This the king, probably saw : and it might be one, if not the chief reason of his requiring the bishops, *Nix* and *Rugg*, to relinquish their oppressive jurisdiction here. However that might be, it is certain that his majesty deserved well of this corporation : and whatever their ideas or feelings may have been, or may now be, on this point, it must be said, that they ought to consider *Henry* among the very chief of their royal benefactors; with whom such princes as *Charles* and *James* the second, can, surely, bear no comparison ; to whom, nevertheless, *statues* have been here erected !! ‡

‡ Of the spirit, or principle that dictated the erection of those statues it may now be safely said, that it was thoroughly vile and disgraceful. —What better can be said of the spirit that was so predominant here during Pitt's administration and execrable reign of terror, when all honest men who saw, deprecated, and reprobated his madbrain system were held up to the contempt and derision of every political coxcomb, and even to the fury of the populace, as Jacobins and traitors ? Time has already done something towards justifying the views and principles of these persecuted people; and futurity will do them still ampler justice. The present generation is likely to be now soon convinced that their politics, which have been so bitterly and violently decried, were a thousand times more worthy of adoption than those of their malicious opponents and revilers : and posterity will not fail to exhibit in their proper colours the extreme folly and wrongheadedness of the measures that this illfated country has been pursuing for the last eighteen years and upwards.

## CHAP. IV.



Further observations on the history of Lynn during the period under consideration——probable state of the town, as to its internal police and municipal economy previously to its being declared a free burgh and receiving its first royal charter——changes resulting from that event——statement of subsequent occurrences:

It has been already observed that Lynn was a place of considerable trade, and of growing importance and opulence, at and before the Conquest. Afterward its trade kept rapidly increasing; and in the reign of *Richard I.* it was become a place of distinguished eminence, insomuch that it was called by William of Newburgh, who lived at that time, “a noble city, or a city of note for its trade and commerce.” \* Foreign merchants had then a regular established connection and intercourse with this town, and their ships and sailors frequented it in great numbers. A considerable body of Jews also had settled here, and must have been among the most active and useful part of its population; which further corroborates the report of its being in those days a place of no small commercial note and consequence, for those

\* Parkin, 116.



people were not likely to settle, in any great numbers, except in places of that description. \* Indeed it seems pretty clear and certain that both in the reign of Rich-

## 3 B

\* The Jews were then very numerous in this country, as well as very opulent, and continued so for no short period. They were generally ill used, and sometimes underwent the most cruel and base treatment. Yet on some occasions they met with different and better usage, and at least what may be called the appearance of favour and encouragement. The following instance is not a little remarkable and striking—"It will hardly be credited [says Andrews] that, in 1241, Henry III issued writs to the sheriffs, ordering them to convene a *parliament of Jews*: six from some towns, and two from others. The writs are now extant. The Jews were proud of this; but Henry only meant to plunder them." The last assertion is probably too true. Henry was just that kind of man. It is however very little known that he was beforehand with Bonaparte in convening a Jewish parliament or Sanhedrim. But the characters of these two potentates are extremely dissimilar, and so probably were their motives for convening the Jewish delegates.—In the above mentioned reign of Richard II the Jews were most shamefully and cruelly plundered and massacred here in different places. In the guilt and infamy of those foul and horrid deeds Lynn appears to have been deeply implicated. The tragical tale is related by *Parkin* from William of Newburgh, and by *Mackrel* from Hollingshed—It states that one of the Lynn Jews being converted to christianity, his brethren were so enraged against him, that they resolved to kill him whenever they had an opportunity. Having accordingly met him one day in the street, they instantly fell upon him, fully intending to execute their bloody purpose, but he escaped out of their hands, and fled into the next church; they followed him thither, and breaking open the doors, would have taken him out by force. Crowds of the inhabitants, with a great number of foreigners, consisting of mariners and others, who traded here, now came upon them, rescued the man, and drove them into their own houses. The townsmen refrained from any further acts of violence, fearful of incurring the displeasure of their sovereign, who had taken the Jews under his protection; but the mariners and the other strangers followed them to their own dwellings, massacred them there, plundered their houses and set them on fire, and immediately taking shipping, escaped with their spoil.—Of the truth of some part of this story some doubt may very reasonably be entertained. It is not very likely that the Jews should act as is here represented toward their converted brother, as they could not be insensible of the extreme risk of such a conduct. Nor is it at all probable that the town rabble should

ard and that of his brother and successor John, Lynn ranked very high among the trading towns of this kingdom, in point of commercial importance: and it is recorded upon undoubted authority, that in the sixth year of the last of those two reigns, (the date of our first royal charter) the tax or tallage of the king at Lynn, amounted to 65*l.* whereas that of London at the same time amounted only to 836*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* ‡ From which we may infer that the revenue which the crown then derived from the trade of this town, was more than two thirds of what it derived from that of London; and consequently that the trade itself of this town did in the mean time bear the same proportion to that of the metropolis: which may be presumed to have been the case of very few places, if any, besides in the kingdom.—Lynn being allowed to have a mint, or mints for the coining of money, belonging to the king and the bishop,

refrain from assisting the strangers in the massacre of the Jews, or desist from joining them in plundering and burning those unhappy people's houses. These may be presumed to be additions to what did then really happen, and designed for the purpose of exaggerating the conduct and blackening the character of the poor Jews, as well as throwing the whole blame and infamy of the most shocking part of the conduct of the opposite party on those foreign mariners and other strangers who happened to be then in the town. It was always the manner of the pretended christians of those days, to impute some previous horrid atrocity to the Jews, in order to blind people's eyes, and extenuate their own barbarous and diabolical treatment of them. Upon the whole the plunder and massacre of the Jews seem to be that part of the above story which is unquestionably authentic. But Lynn was not the only place in England where the Jews were then so treated. The brutal and horrid work began in London, whence it extended to Lynn and other places, even as far as York, where it ended in a scene most shockingly tragical; the effects of which proved fatal to the commercial prosperity of that ancient city.—See Andrews, 1. 192.

‡ Parkin, 120; whose authority is Madox's Hist. of the Exchequer.

‡ has been deemed another proof of the flourishing state of the town at that period.

Of the government of Lynn, or its municipal economy in those times, very little is known, except that it appears to have been under the management of an officer who bore the name of *provost*, who doubtless was nominated by the bishop, and acted as his bailiff or deputy ; but whether he was elected annually or held his office for a longer or shorter term, or during the pleasure of his master, seems rather uncertain. He was, however, the chief magistrate of the town, and had, of course, other officers assisting and acting under him, like our chief magistrates of more modern times. It is very probable that the order of things in this town was not so materially changed by *king JOHN* as some may imagine. The chief alteration apparently was, that the town now ranked among those incorporated by royal charter, was consequently declared a free burgh, had its burgesses exempted from tolls, &c. in all parts of England, but London ; and finally, had its chief magistrate denominated *mayor*, instead of *provost*,\* a circumstance, probably of no mighty consequence, or real benefit to the community, though highly gratifying, perhaps, to the pride and vanity of the corporation. The real difference, however, between a *mayor* and a *provost*, seems

### 3 B 2

‡ Parkin, as before.

\* That Lynn was a mayor-town in the reign, or before the death of *JOHN*, has been disputed by some ; but the fact seems fully ascertained from the Patent rolls—that king's letters patents, dated at Devizes, Wilts, June, 7. (1216) in the 18th. year of his reign, being addressed to the MAYOR and good men of Lenn.



to be very little, if any thing, more than that between *Tweedledum* and *Tweedledee*. The former indeed is generally taken to be the highest and most honourable appellation, and therefore our corporations naturally prefer it to the other, as the title of their head man, or chief magistrate. After all, the inferiority of the *provost* does not seem always perceivable; and nobody, perhaps, would deem the *lord MAYOR of York* as superior in dignity to the *lord PROVOST of Edinburgh*.

The smiles and favours of royalty are always gratifying to most people: those of *king JOHN* were so, no doubt, to his Lynn subjects, and may be supposed to have confirmed them more than ever in their attachment to him, which appears to have continued very strong and steady afterwards during the remainder of his reign. Of the worth and merit of that attachment, his majesty seemed duly sensible: as a proof of which, they received from him in return, some very flattering and lasting tokens, beside the immunities and privileges specified in his charters; especially the silver *cup* which is still in being, and shewn to strangers and others as a great curiosity. It is an elegant, double-gilt, embossed, and enamelled cup and cover, weighing 73 ounces, and of exquisite workmanship, and shews the uncommon skill and ingenuity of some of our silver-smiths of that period, who were probably of the monkish order, as our best artists, as well as most renowned scholars, were then chiefly to be found within the solemn precincts of our monasteries.

The *sword*, which is usually carried before our mayors,

has been also considered as another mark or token of king *JOHN*'s favour to this town; but this appears a very questionable matter. This weapon, which has a silver mounting, the king is said to have taken from his side, and given to the corporation, to be carried before the mayor: but it does not appear that there was a sword at all carried before our mayors as early as the reign of king John, or even for a long time after. If such a ceremony was really observed here before the reign of Henry V. or of Henry VI. it must seemingly have been appropriated solely to the great lords of the place, the bishops of Norwich, who appear all along to have claimed that honour as their own peculiar and exclusive prerogative: the mayors having no share in it, but only as they followed their masters, the bishops, and formed a part of their retinue. Bishop Gibson, in his additions to Camden, observes that the present sword, though said to have been given by king John, was really the gift of Henry VIII. after the town came into his possession, and he changed their *burgesses* into *aldermen*. John's charter does not mention the sword, but that granted by Henry expressly says, that he granted them a sword to be carried before their mayor. As to the inscription on the blade of the present sword, purporting its being the gift of king John, it proves nothing, being apparently the unauthorized contrivance of two forward fellows of the town, a sword cutler and a school-master, as late as the reign of queen Elizabeth.\* But however improbable it may be that the said sword was ever the property of king John, and given by him as a present

\* See Gibson's Camden—Parkin—Mackrel, and Tour of Norfolk.

and mark of his royal and special favour to this corporation, yet there does not seem to be any just reason for entertaining similar doubts respecting the *cup* before-mentioned. The only circumstance relating to the cup which one would be inclined to deem doubtful, or rather incredible, is a certain sly insinuation, which has been sometimes heard, that it was a part of a parcel of stolen goods, which his majesty, while on a visit at Walsingham, contrived to pilfer from that celebrated abbey, and coming afterwards to Lynn, made a present of it to the corporation.

Lynn seems to have paid very dearly for the said king's favours. Camden, in his account of this town observes, that it enjoys very large immunities, which its inhabitants "purchased of king John with the price of their own blood, spent in the defence of his cause:" alluding, probably, to the powerful assistance they afforded him in reducing the disaffected barons of this county, whose subjugation proved an arduous undertaking, and whom he afterwards severely chastised. The assistance they rendered to this sovereign consisted not only in recruits for his army, or a strong and resolute body of landsmen, but also in sailors and ships for his naval operations: hence Lynn and Yarmouth are mentioned by Carte among the principal places that furnished his majesty with a *fleet* to oppose that of France on a certain occasion.\* In short, the good people of this town appear to have assisted that memorable monarch to the utmost of their ability, or in all the ways,

\* Carte 1. 840.



and by all the means that were in their power. He, on the other hand, is said to have been very partial to them, and deemed them so trustworthy, and their town so secure a place, that he deposited there, for sometime his crown and regalia, and his most valuable treasures ; but took them away at his last visit, and lost them all, soon after, in crossing the Wash, at an improper place, or improper time ; which he laid so to heart that it hastened his death, which took place a very short time after at Newark. There is indeed no small disagreement among our historians in their accounts of king John after his last departure from Lynn. Some represent him as crossing the *Wash*, or rather the *Ouse*, then called *Wellstream*, at the *Cross Keys* ; others represent him as crossing it at *Wisbeach*, and the latter seems to be the truth. Some, again, ascribe the illness which terminated his life, to *poison*, administered by a monk of Swineshead ; others ascribe it to *vexation* for the loss of his treasures ; while others assure us that it is to be ascribed to neither of these causes, but that he was ill before that disaster of losing his treasures befel him. Nay, some have alleged, or suggested, that his last illness originated at Lynn, and was occasioned by his intemperate living during his stay here. In accounts so different and contradictory, it is no easy task to distinguish truth from fiction. It seems however to be pretty well established that the said king left Lynn on the 11th of October, 1216, was at Wisbeach on the 12th, at Sleaford on the 15th, and at Newark on the 18th, where he died the very next day : but the story of the poison seems very doubtful and even improbable ; nor does that

concerning the loss of his crown and treasures seem perfectly clear and indubitable.\*

Even the fact that Lynn had been the depository of the king's treasures, with his crown and regalia, during his absence from these parts, and till he removed them at his last departure, becomes very doubtful, or rather quite improbable, if we believe Rapin's assertion, from M. Paris, that the king's great competitor, the Dauphin, not long before, and within that same year, had actually reduced Lynn, and made the whole county, as well as those of Suffolk and Essex tributary to him. In that case, those treasures, &c. if deposited here, must inevitably have fallen into the Dauphin's hands, and so be entirely lost to the king. We must therefore either conclude that the alledged fact of Lynn having been the depository of the said treasures, for any length of time, is unfounded, or that the said assertion, that Lynn had been that year taken by the Dauphin, is so. But as these matters are not very interesting, we will now drop them, and also our account of king John for the present.

After the death of John, and in the reign of his son and successor, Henry III. the people of Lynn, at one time, seem to have sided with the malecontents of that period, and so forfeited their chartered rights: but their defection was of no long duration; they returned to their duty with every appearance of contrition, and soon gave full proof of the ardour, as well as the unfeigned-

\* Compare Parkin, Rapin, Carte, and Andrews.

ness of their loyalty. Camden says that they “purchased their lost liberties of Henry III. not without blood, when they sided with him against the outlawed barons, and unluckily engaged them in the isle of Ely. An account whereof we have in the book of Ely, and in Matthew Paris.”\* The battle here alluded to, was fought somewhere about Littleport, where the Lynn volunteers of that day were very roughly handled by their opponents, and lost a considerable number of their people; of which mention has been made by several of our historians. In the 8th and 9th years of that king’s reign, licence was granted to foreign merchants to come with safety to the fair of Lenn; and in the 11th year a talliage was granted to the king by the bishop. The oath of the burghers then was, “You shall faithfully pay your talliage made by the lord (bp.) at his will, of all your chattels of your own property, whatever they are, and of the chattels of your wife, and all that is your due to pay.” † Thus payment was made upon oath; but the tax was granted to the king by the bishop, without the concurrence of the burghers; and also assessed and levied by him *at his will*, without check or control. In such a case, and under such circumstances, it might be reasonably supposed there would be some misdoings, and not a few causes of complaint, and that misunderstanding would arise between his lordship and his Lynn vassals, which might lead to very serious results. That it really did so happen appears from authentic documents.

## 3 C

\* See Gibson’s Camden.

† Parkin, 122.



Sometime after the above taxation, the people or burgesses of Lynn, dissatisfied, it seems, with the arbitrary and oppressive proceeding of their lord, the bishop, in that instance, and questioning his right to tax them at his will, or without their consent, took upon them to tax themselves without consulting him, as well as to elect a mayor also without his permission. This his lordship greatly resented, as absolutely illegal and highly criminal: and he also, very sorely felt it, no doubt, as deeply affecting his own baronial claims here, or endangering his feudal dominion. He accordingly proceeded against them in the ecclesiastical court, and had them all excommunicated. In that grievous dilemma, and from so arbitrary and galling a sentence, they appealed to the king's justices at Westminster, before whom the affair underwent a legal investigation: of which, and its result, the following account is given by Parkin.

“ In the 8th. of this king ( Henry III.) a fine was levied at Westminster in Trinity term, before Robert Lexington, William de York, Ralph de Norwich, William de Lisle, Adam Fitz-William, and Ralph de Rokele, the king's justices, between the mayor and burgesses, querents, and Thomas Blundevile, bishop of Norwich, deforciant. The Mayor &c. complained, that the bishop had impleaded them in a court christian (ecclesiastical or spiritual court) and had excommunicated them, because they had created a mayor among themselves, and had taxed and talliaged themselves in the said burgh without his assent; and it was agreed between them in the said court, that the bishop should

grant for himself and successors, and his church of Norwich, that the said burgesses, for the future, may chuse and create to themselves a mayor, whomsoever they pleased of their own body, on this condition, That immediately after his election, or creation, they should present him to the bishop and his successors, wherever they should be in the diocese of Norwich; who on the presentation should be admitted by the bishop without any contradiction: and for this fine and concord, the mayor and burgesses grant for themselves, their heirs and successors, that whosoever shall be so created and elected mayor by them, shall promise on his good faith and fealty, by which he is engaged to the bishop, and his successors, that he will observe all things that belong to his office, as long as he shall continue therein, and preserve, as much as is in his power, the liberties of the church of Norwich. This agreement and fine was made in the presence of the king, who consented to it. This king, as appears from many instances, sate frequently in the court of king's bench at the head of his justices. " \*

It does not appear from the above account how the taxation or assessment business was then settled; but it seems most probable that it was taken out of the hands both of the bishop and the burgesses, and committed to the management of certain officers appointed by the crown. It is likely indeed that that point had been previously settled, and that the names of the first offi-

cers, or assessors, are still preserved: for we are told that “ in the 17th. of the said reign, (which was the year preceding that of the above trial) Thomas de Milton, and Warin, son of Imbert, were named by the king, to assess the talliage, and all the demesns of the see of Norwich. ” † This point therefore might not come under discussion in the above trial at Westminster. But the case of creating, or choosing a mayor, seems to have been there very carefully investigated. The result was (as above stated) that the right of the burgesses, to elect a mayor from among themselves, was fully established; on the express condition, however, that, immediately after his election, they should present him to the bishop, wherever he should be within the diocese; who on his part was to receive him without any refusal, disapproval, or, contradiction.

From the preceding statement one would be apt to conclude, that the right of the burgesses to choose a mayor, independently of the bishop's will and pleasure, was now fully settled, and that his lordship would no longer presume to interfere, either directly or indirectly, on that occasion. But it cannot be affirmed that the event warrants that conclusion. The lust of power is a strong passion, and not very soon or easily subdued. The bishops having so long borne uncontrolled sway in the direction and management of every thing in this town, it was not to be expected that they would be very ready to resign or relinquish it. The mayors here from the first, it seems, were called *The bishop's men*,

† Parkin, as before.



and their lordships appeared always desirous to perpetuate the appellation, or, at least, to do all in their power to prevent its becoming inapplicable. Though the words of charters, the opinions of judges, and even the declarations of kings, might appear against them, yet they were scarcely ever at a loss for ways and means to surmount or evade all such difficulties, and secure their own beloved power and preponderance. So the case seems to have been at Lynn for a very long period. Neither the provision of charters, the verdict of judges, nor the orders of princes, could effect any material or lasting diminution of the exorbitant power of the bishop over this town, till the 16th. century. It appeared like an inveterate evil, or incurable malady, until it felt the royal touch of Henry VIII. when it gave way at once, and underwent a radical and perfect cure.

As to the above agreement between the contending parties at Westminster, it does not appear that the bishops thought proper long, if at all, to act in compliance with it, and so refrain from any further interference in the election or appointment of a chief magistrate. This must have sat uneasy on the minds of the corporation, and they would naturally, and perhaps repeatedly complain to their sovereign against so oppressive an infringement of their municipal rights. Even the king himself also would feel it as an insult offered to him, as he was personally present when the agreement was made, and had sanctioned it by his own express approbation. On this ground we may account for that clause in the charter which he granted to our burgesses in the 52nd.

year of his reign, in which he not only confirms their former liberties, but also allows them to choose a mayor of themselves, *without presenting him to the bishop*. This last exemption from a former obligation and customary observance, seems plainly to indicate that the bishop had taken some such undue advantage of his power and influence as was before suggested; of which his majesty now thought proper to signify his entire disapprobation, by discharging the burghers from every obligation to pay his lordship any further regard, in their future choice or appointment of a chief magistrate. This the bishop must have felt somewhat mortifying. But as his feudal jurisdiction here still continued unabridged, it was not likely he would be long at a loss to find means to evade the force or operation of that humiliating clause, and secure or reestablish his wonted preeminence. That it actually did so happen, appears but too evident by all that we know of the subsequent history of the town. Every attempt to reduce the bishop's predominance here, during the period of which we are now treating, proved unsuccessful. The burgesses never could effectually shake off his yoke, or cease to be his vassals and subjects; and even their elections of mayors, in general, if not always, might be compared to the modern conge d'elire elections of bishops, by our Deans and Chapters.

During the long reign of which we have been speaking, this kingdom suffered extremely from civil discord and intestine commotions; and the inhabitants of Lynn bore their share in those sufferings. Great numbers of

their people perished in a bloody and unfortunate engagement against the barons, up in the country somewhere towards Littleport, as has been before noticed; which must have proved a most distressing calamity to the whole town, and especially to the wives and children and other relatives of the vanquished and slaughtered warriors. The enemy, being so strong and formidable in and about the Isle of Ely, must also have cut off all communication between Lynn and that district, and even interrupted its intercourse with all the interior parts of the country, as he had the entire command of the rivers and channels of internal navigation. This seems to have continued a long while, and must have distressed this town in a very great degree. It appears, however, to have been quite over, and tranquillity fully restored in the 41st. year of that reign, as we find the mayor and burgesses were that year commanded by the king to permit the men of Ely to come here to sell their beer, and exercise merchandise, as they had been used to do before the disturbance. \* In the 50th year of the same reign, as we are further informed, the king's purveyors bought at Lynn 36 tuns of wine, which the sheriff of Norfolk was ordered to have conveyed to his majesty, then at the siege of Kenilworth, or Kennelworth Castle, in Warwickshire. † This also shews that there were then no

\* Parkin 123.

† See Parkin, as before; who further observes, that Lynn was famous at that time for importing wine: and it seems that foreign wine was then very cheap here, compared with what it is at present. Hence Parkin mentions a pipe of wine as selling here then at 1*l.* 15*s.* and a tun of wine at 50*s.* These were probably red wine, for he afterwards mentions a tun of white wine as having been sold for three marks and a half; i. e. 2*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*—The mark being 13*s.* 4*d.*—Wine sells here now at



very serious or dangerous commotions in the parts about the Fens, and westward of Lynn, otherwise it would have been out of the sheriff's power to have the said wine conveyed across that country, and to his majesty's camp before Kennelworth. It is however alledged by our historians that the malecontents who seized upon the Isle of Ely were the last that held out, and that they did not surrender till after the reduction of Kennelworth Castle. However that was, it is allowed that the rebellion was now soon quelled, and that the country afterwards enjoyed peace and tranquillity, for a long period.

It was in this king's reign, as was before observed, that the Ouse and other rivers deserted their ancient and natural course by Wisbeach, and after inundating the fen country to a very great extent, from the effect of which it has never yet recovered, forced their passage into the sea by Lynn. A neglecting of the old outfall, which occasioned the choking up of the channel and impeding the course of the waters, in the time of a great flood, has been assigned as the cause of that memorable event. But as the malecontents had for sometime occupied the fens, and made their last stand there, and as the inundation might conduce materially to their defence, it seems very natural to suspect that they also had some hand in the business. Yet as our historians are silent on

a price above 50 times higher than what it did at that period. Salmon was an article that appears to have always fetched a high price in those days; and Parkin, in the place from which these articles have been extracted, mentions 20s. as paid for 5 Salmons sent to the bishop of Norwich at South Elmham, on monday before the feast of the purification. Ten such Salmons were then, it seems, as valuable as a pipe of wine.

this head, we cannot affirm it as a matter of fact. The event proved, no doubt, detrimental to Wisbeach; and yet not materially advantageous, at least, not immediately so, to Lynn. Nor does it appear that even our harbour was at all improved by so large an accession of fresh water: on the contrary, for aught we know, the approach from the sea to this town was quite as good before as it has been since. It may be said however to be an event that somewhat contributes to preserve the memory of the third Henry, among the people of these parts. The character of this monarch is well known, and is no way worthy of respect or imitation. He was great in nothing but the vileness of his government and the length of his reign, which extended to the 57th year: the longest of any English reign, for the last ten centuries. For the evils of which, and of all the bad and unfortunate reigns that have occurred ever since that period, many, it is supposed, will deem the blessed prosperity of the present wise and happy reign as more than a sufficient counterbalance and compensation—especially, if it should also last as long, or still longer than that of Henry III. which seems not at all improbable: and who is it, within this favoured country, but does consider this as a consummation most devoutly to be wished?

## CHAP. V.



State of society at Lynn during the period under consideration—the subject may be elucidated from documents relative to our ancient Gilds—observations on the nature of those fraternities—very common in this country before the reformation—names and number of those of Lynn.

It is sad enough to think, that during so long an interval as that between the conquest and the reformation, the good people of Lynn should never be able entirely to emancipate themselves from their feudal vassalage. But as that desirable object always proved to them unattainable, they appear to have submitted to their hard fate with exemplary patience and forbearance; well knowing, it seems, to use the words of the old adage, that what cannot be cured must be endured. It is much to be doubted if their descendants, or rather their successors of the present day, would have endured what they did with equal propriety and long suffering. We are indeed but imperfectly acquainted with the social complexion, or characteristic features of the community here in those times; but from what we do know, there is reason to think favourably of the prevailing disposition of the inhabitants. Except in the shocking affair



of the poor Jews, and what happened in the time of bishop Spencer and of bishop Wakeryng, and of the two aldermen Wentworth and Petipas, already noticed, we perceive no vestige here of tumultuous risings or factious combinations. Industry and harmony appear generally to have prevailed at Lynn, and the community seldom failed in the duty of submission to their superiors, or of obeying the higher powers.

On the state of society in this town, during the period now under consideration, nothing perhaps throws so much light as certain existing documents relating to our ancient Gilds, which seem to have been more numerous here than any where else in the kingdom. They were friendly associations formed for the mutual benefit of their respective members. Some of them were large trading companies, holding considerable possessions, in houses, lands, and mercantile property. Others were of a humbler sort, suited to the convenience and wants of those who moved in a lower sphere, and constructed on principles, perhaps, somewhat similar to those of our modern purse clubs, or benefit societies. All were calculated to help the individuals who composed them, to pass through life more comfortably, obtain a more easy and plentiful subsistence, cherish love and goodwill within their respective circles, and promote the peace and welfare of the town or community in general.

The Gilds, certainly, form a most prominent feature in the character of the ancient inhabitants of Lynn. They were indeed very common in this country before

the reformation, and during the period we are now considering; but were more numerous in this town than any where else we know of, which is a very remarkable and, perhaps, unaccountable circumstance. It seems very honourable to the memory of our forefathers—more so, probably, than any thing else we can mention; and therefore we shall dwell upon the subject with the greater pleasure. It shews that there was then among the inhabitants a prevailing or general disposition to assist one another, and to give to every honest individual an opportunity to place himself in such a situation as would not fail of bettering his condition, and procuring him useful friends and reputable associates.

These useful institutions, in most other places, only amounted to one or two, or a few, by which only a small part of the population could be very materially benefited by them. But here they were formed on a large scale, and multiplied to *above thirty*; some of them varying pretty much from others, to suit, as we may suppose, the different conditions of the inhabitants, all, or most of whom might consequently accomodate themselves, or easily find a fraternity whose constitution exactly corresponded with their respective capacities, wants, or wishes.—Our Gilds had all of them a strong tincture of religion, or rather of superstition, according to the prevailing fashion of the times. In that view they exhibited, no doubt, a large portion of weakness, ignorance, and absurdity. But they appear to have been very free from that jealousy, bigotry, and ill will towards each other, which too often disgrace the reli-

gious fraternities of the present day, who look upon one another with such an evil eye, that they may be too justly said to hate one another. Trusting in themselves that they are righteous, they despise others, and are ready to say to their neighbours, and all who differ from them, stand by yourselves, come not near to us, for we are holier than you. While they inveigh against pharisees, and a pharisaical spirit, they give impartial and intelligent bystanders every reason to think, that they are themselves, in fact, the pharisees of the present day, and are led by the very spirit against which they declaim. But we will drop this subject for the present, and resume that of the Gilds, which we shall here handle under different heads, or sections.

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SECTION I. *Observations on the origin of our ancient Gilds.\**

The author of a late publication, entitled *Caledonia*, gives it as his opinion, that the monks were the earliest Gild brethren, and had exclusive privileges of trade and of fishery when boroughs had scarcely an existence. To which the annual reviewer of that work objects, and affirms that the origin of Gilds lies hidden in obscurity inaccessible: and against the idea of their being

\* The word Gild, (says Chambers,) is formed from the Saxon *Gildan*, to pay, because every man was *gildare*, i. e. to pay something towards the charge and support of the company.



of monkish origin, he urges, their being constructed so much on the principles of a purse club, that they can hardly not have been founded by married men. \* The truth seems to be, that they originated among the Anglo-Saxons, long before the Conquest, if not also before their conversion to christianity, and the commencement of English monkery. At first, they may be supposed to assume a simple and homely appearance, among the civil institutions of the Anglo-Saxon community; but afterwards to pass through different changes, and especially after the conquest, when the general state of society and the whole order of things experienced so considerable a revolution. They were then, at first, perhaps, put down or laid aside, and afterwards revived and resumed: at least, we hear little or nothing of them under the first Norman kings, or till about the 13th. century.

The most common and prevailing opinion seems to be, that the gilds sprung from the Anglo-Saxons *tithings*: though it may, perhaps, be questioned, if the tithings themselves did not take their rise from them. Jacob, from Camden, informs us, that the origin of gilds and fraternities is said to be from the Saxon law, by which neighbours entered into an association, and became bound for each other, to bring forth him who committed any crime, or make satisfaction to the party injured; for which purpose they raised a sum of money among themselves, and put it into a common stock, whereout a pecuniary compensation was made according to the

\* Annual Review for 1807, 490.

quality of the offence committed. From hence came our fraternities and gilds: and they were in use in this kingdom long before any formal licences were granted for them: though at this day [that is, in Camden's time] they are a company combined together, with orders and laws made by themselves, by the prince's licence. " \* Chambers, in his Cyclopædia, expresses himself much to the same purpose. "The original of Gilds, says he, is thus related: it being a law among the saxons, that every freeman † of fourteen years old should find sureties to keep the peace, or be committed to prison; certain neighbours [therefore] entered into an association, [consisting of ten families,] and became bound for each other, either to produce him who committed an offence, or to make satisfaction to the injured party. That they might the better do this, they raised a sum of money among themselves, which they put into a common stock; and when one of their pledges had committed an offence, and was fled, then the other nine made satisfaction out of this stock, by payment of money according to the offence. Because this association consisted of ten families, it was called a *decennary*: hence came our fraternities. In observance of the above law, or custom, as the same writer informs us, the sheriffs at every county court did from time to time take the oaths of young persons, as they arrived at the age of fourteen, and see that they belonged to one *decennary* or another. ‡ —Such is the ac-

\* See Jacob's Law Dictionary, under the word GUILD.

† Religious persons, clerks, knights and their eldest sons, excepted.

‡ Chambers' Cyclopædia, under GILD and FRANK pledges.

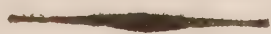
count given by these writers of the ancient decennaries, or tythings, from which the gilds are supposed to have sprung; but it seems uncertain, after all, whether the gilds sprung from the decennaries, or the decennaries from them, or which of the two is the most ancient. They might be coëval, and grow up together: and the gilds having survived the decennaries might occasion their being supposed to have sprung from them.

Turner, the ingenious historian of the Anglo-Saxons, seems also to ascribe to them the origination of Gilds: and he observes, that the gilds, or social confederations, in which many of those people chose to arrange themselves, deserve very particular attention. Among other things, he says, that their gilds are sometimes alluded to in the laws. If a man without paternal relations should fight and kill another, then his maternal kinsmen were ordered to pay one third of the Were, his gild a third, and for the other part his gild was to escape. In London there appears to have been free gilds. In a charter of Canterbury, the three companies of the citizens within the walls, and those without, are mentioned. Domesday also mentions a Gild of the Clergy in that city. In short, Gilds appear to have been very common, and in great request among the Anglo-Saxons. They seem on the whole, as our author thinks, to be friendly associations, made for mutual aid and contribution, to meet the pecuniary exigencies which were perpetually arising, from burials, legal exactions, penal mulcts, and other payments, or compensations. That much good fellowship was connected with them, cannot



be doubted. The fines of their own imposition imply that the materials of conviviality were not forgotten. In short, he thinks they may be called the Anglo-Saxon clubs.—Even the more uncommon species of those confederations, called *Gilda Mercatoria*, or *Merchant's Gild*, seems to have existed among the same people. That in mercantile and Sea ports, says the same author, there were also gilds and fraternities of men constituted for the purpose of carrying on more successful enterprizes in commerce, even in the Anglo-Saxon times, appears to be a fact. Domesday, (he adds,) mentions the *Gi-halla*, or Guildhall of the burghers of Dover. \*

The Gilds of Lynn, however, cannot be traced to so remote a period as that of the Anglo-Saxons. There may, indeed, have been gilds here at that period, and the fact can hardly be doubted, as they were then so much in vogue, but we have no traces of them now remaining. All the Lynn Gilds, whose names and remains have reached our time, seem to have sprung up long after the conquest. Of them we shall treat in the ensuing pages.



## SECTION II. *Names and Number of our ancient Gilds; with some additional observations.*

Of the Lynn Gilds our printed books give but a very imperfect and wretched account. Their list of names is extremely defective, and the idea which they give of

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\* See Turner's Hist. of the Anglo-Saxons, 2nd. Ed. vol. 2. p. 103, &c.

those institutions is equally so. For a more correct and ample information on this subject we are chiefly indebted to Mr. King's MS Volume, before mentioned, which was compiled about a hundred years ago, by some unknown hand, or hands, from certain ancient and authentic documents, which seem no longer to exist. Both Mackrel and Parkin appear to have seen this volume, but they have not availed themselves of it to the extent they might have done. Even its most curious and interesting parts they have left unnoticed. In the latter part of this volume is inserted the following "Catalogue of the Gildes in the Towne of Lynn"—amounting in all to thirty one. They stand in the following order: 1. The Gild of *St. George*. 2. The Gild of *St. Erasmus*. 3. The Gild of *St. John Baptist*. 4. The Gild of *St. Gyles and St. Julian*: 5. The Gild of *St. Ethelerede*: 6. The Gild of *St. Margaret*: 7. The Gild of *St. Anne*: 8. The Gild of the *12 Apostles*: 9. The Gild of *St. Christopher*: 10. The Gild of *our Lady*: 11. The Gild of *St. Micheal the Archangel*: 12. The Gild of *St. Nicholas*: 13. The Gild of *St. Awdreys*: 14. The Gild of *St. Michael and King Henry*: 15. The Gild of *St. Cyprian*. 16. The Gild of *St. Fabian and St Sabestian*: 17. The Gild of *St. Lawrence*: 18. The Gild of *St. Agnes*: 19, The Gild of *CorpusChristi*: 20, The Gild of the *Trinity*: 21. The Gild of *St. Andrew*: 22. The Gild of *Holy Rood*: 23. The Gild of *St. Lovis*: 24. The Gild of *St. Austin*: 25. The Gild of *St. Barbara*: 26. The Gild of *St. Antony*: 27. The Gild of *St. Stephen*: 28. The Gild of *St. Francis*: 29. The Gild

of the *Shoemakers*: 30. The *Red Gild*: 31. The Gild of *St. William*, trading to North Bern.

Such a large number of these fraternities, in such a place as Lynn, and at such a period, must appear not a little extraordinary, and what seems very difficult, if not impossible, to account for, but on the supposition, that there existed here, in the mean time, a very respectable degree of public and social virtue, or in other words a prevailing disposition among the inhabitants to promote each other's interest and happiness. Upon that idea they must be thought very highly of, as nothing could well be more creditable or honourable to their memory. A tribute of respect, which seems to be so fairly and justly their due, ought not to be here withheld from them.—Nor should it here pass unnoticed, that Lynn is still distinguished for a respectable number of similar institutions; that is to say, for its purse-clubs, or benefit societies, the gilds of the 18th. and 19th centuries. Their number is about *twenty*; and their members, altogether, may amount to 700, or more; but, as most of them have families, the benefit or advantage of these useful associations may be supposed to extend, perhaps, to more than three times that number. Of the real and important utility of these social institutions no doubt can be entertained. The fact is universally admitted. They are certainly beneficial, not only to the individuals more immediately concerned, but even to the community at large, by keeping a great many honest and industrious people from becoming bur-



densome to the parishes to which they belong.—It ought also to be remarked that the benefits resulting from these estimable institutions are to be attributed neither to the wisdom of government, nor yet to the fostering care of the corporation, but merely to the very commendable thoughtfulness and virtue of the individuals that compose them. But here is not the place to enlarge upon this topic: we shall therefore drop it for this time, and resume the former subject.

Of these thirty one Gilds, above named, several seem to have been of the higher order of those associations, or of the mercantile sort, consisting of trading or commercial adventurers, who enjoyed certain privileges by grants from the crown. This appears to have been the case with the 1st. the 4th. the 19th. the 20th. and 31st. in the above catalogue: that is, the Gild of *St. George*, that of *St. Gyles* and *St. Julian*, that of *Corpus Christi*, that of the *Trinity*, and that of *St. William*, trading to north Bern. There might probably be some few more of the same description. All the rest, it is supposed, were friendly associations, formed for the benefit of the lower orders of freemen, that is, of those who were not in a state of villanage, for none of the latter appear to have been admitted into those fraternities. Poor creatures! they were debarred from all such advantages and comforts! In further considering the Lynn gilds, we shall take them in the order in which they stand in the catalogue, though it does not seem to be the most regular and natural order, that of seniority.

SECTION III. *A more particular account of some of the Lynn Gilds.*

1. *St. George's Gild.* Of this fraternity the following account is given by Parkin—"Henry IV. by his letters patent, gave and granted license to John Brandon, Bartholomew Sistern, and John Snailwell of Lenne Episcopi, that they might make, found, and establish to the honor of God, and the glorious martyr, St. George a certain fraternity, brotherhood, and perpetual Guild of themselves and others, who out of their devotion, were willing to be of the said fraternity: and that brothers and sisters of the fraternity and guild for the time being might chuse, make, and ordain one alderman, and four custodes of the said fraternity and guild, yearly, for the good and profit of the same, and out of the brethren of the said fraternity and guild: and that the said alderman and custodes and their successors, by the names of the alderman and custodes of the said guild, should have power, and be able to take, receive, and hold, any lands, tenements, rents, and possessions whatsoever, or should be by any ways or means granted to them, and to do in all other respects, &c. and to act as the rest of his liège subjects, or persons do, and have power, and are enabled to act.—And further the said King, out of his abundant grace, granted and gave licence, by his said letters patent, for himself and his heirs, to the aforesaid alderman and custodes and their successors, for the time being, that they might receive and hold to themselves and their successors for ever, and purchase of J. March the right that Richard Waterden

had therein of all that tenement, with a kay adjoining, with all its buildings and appertenances in Lenn aforesaid, which belonged to Robert Baylly, which tenement is in the street called Le Cheker, between the tenement formerly of John de Couteshale and the heirs of the late William Bytering, now of William Hundredpound, and the heirs of the late John Wyntworth, on the south part, the tenement formerly of Nicholas Swerdeston, late of John Wyghton, wherein Walter Tudenham now dwells, and extends itself in length from the common way towards the west to the tenement formerly of Dominick Baude, afterwards of Richard Denne, lately of John Grene, clérk, then of Thomas Botekesham to the east. And the aforesaid kay lies opposite to the said tenement, in breadth, between the kay formerly of the aforesaid John Couteshale, lately of the aforesaid John Wyntworth, to the south, and the common lane, (venellam) called cornlane, on the north, and extends itself from the common way to the east, to the great bank (ripam) of Lenne, to the west, as well as for the maintenance of one or two chaplains, as to pray for the good estate of the king and his most beloved consort Joan, queen of England, as long as they lived, and for their souls after their deaths, and for the souls of their most beloved father and mother, deceased, as also for the good state of all and singular the brothers and sisters of the fraternity and guild aforesaid, according to the will and ordinance of the aforesaid alderman, the custodes, and their successors." \*

\* Parkin, 134, 5.



This Gild, it is said, received many other grants of lands and tenements from Henry V. which probably might also be the case from some of the succeeding princes. But at the reformation it was dissolved, as were also the rest, at least those that were of a trading nature \*: all whose possessions, it is supposed, were given to the corporation by Edward VI.--The premises here described were in Checker Street, and comprehended the Gild Hall of the fraternity, called St. George's Hall, now the Play-house. †

From the above extract the reader may form some idea of our ancient gild of St. George. But in order to have a more accurate and perfect conception of it, and of the others, all the following accounts must be compared together. Of most of our gilds we have only the names. Of others some further information is still obtainable, of which the author will endeavour in these pages to make the best use he can. It may be here just observed, that the gilds of the higher order appear to have their respective *altars* in the different churches of the town, which shews how much religion was blended with those institutions, and what a high character for sanctity the members assumed. They had also their respective

\* The Gilds of the common people, or those which had no large possessions attached to them, were then probably not meddled with, but suffered to go on as before. Some of them, as we have before seen, existed in Camden's time, and perhaps a good while afterwards.

† St. George's Hall, after it became the property of the corporation, was long used as a court-house, to hold the quarter-sessions for the county. Those sessions have since been removed to the Trinity Gild-hall, now the Town-hall: since which time St. George's hall has been converted into a Play-house, and is now during the mart time, and for sometime after, occupied annually by a company of comedians.

*chaplains*, to act as their proper religious functionaries, and pray for the souls of their members and benefactors, dead as well as living.

Of the second and third gild in the above catalogue, that is, those of *St. Erasmus* and of *St. John Baptist*, we have been able to obtain no further information. They were probably of the lower description of these fraternities, and having no large possessions attached to them, they left behind scarcely any trace or memorial of their existence. They might, for all that, be very respectable in their day, and their members be as useful and worthy members of the community as those who composed the great trading or mercantile gilds.

Of the fourth gild in the catalogue, that of *St. Gyles* and *St. Julian*, we know more than of the two last mentioned. This, in its day, must have been a notable gild. It was founded in the 14th century, and in the reign of Richard II. as appears from the following very curious document, preserved in Mr. King's book, and which is here given in the original orthography—"In the honour of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our Ladie Seynt Marie, and of all the holy company of heaven, and speciallith of the holy corsayntis Seynt Gyles and Seynt Julian, This Gild is ordeynd and begonnen ye year of the Incarnation of our Lord 1384.—And this Gild shall be holden at Lenn the Sunday next after ye ffeast of the apostelis Peter and Paul, that the alderman and gild bretheren and sisters of this gild shal gone togeder to ye church of Seynt James of Lenn orderly and manly two

and two togedir, and offer there at ilke messes each brother and sisters ob. upon payn of a pound of wax.—Also ordeynd is that the alderman of the gild and also the gild brothers and sisters shal dyen togedir every general day and each brother and sister shall pay to ye subsidie and costages of this gild 8*d*. on the mornng. after the general day without any long abideing, as well those that are absent as those that are present, except the officers, that is to say, the alderman, 4 skyveyns, clerk, and dean, which shall no subsidie pay for the time they are in office.—And also it is ordeynd that what brother or sister of this gylde yt is in the towne of Lynne or in 40 mile and in heela and will not come to his general day and to his mornspech and does as is aforesaid and make none attone for him he shall pay for the amendment of the gild as oft sithes as may be P<sup>nd</sup> on him 6*s*. 8*d*. without any forgiveness.—And also ordeynd it is that what man that will bene a brother of this gilde from this time aforesaid shall not be received but at the genll. day, or at the mornspech, and that he have 2 bretheren to withness with him yt he is good man and able and of good conversation before ye alderman & all ye gild bretheren, & he shall pay to the profith of this house 6*d*. that is to say, to ye wax 2*d*. to the alderman 2*d*. to the clerke 1*d*. to the dean 1*d*.—And also each man yt shll enter into this gild for to be a brother, he shll pay for his entry to ye increase of ye chattels of ye gild 13*s*. 4*d*. and find a sufficient \* to pay it within ye first year after his coming in upon pain of double or

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\* A word is here left out: *Security*, perhaps.



his † for him.—And also if any brother or sister of this gild be deed in ye towne of Lenn ye dean shall warn all ye gild bretheren & sisters yt are in towne to go to ye church with ye cors & offer each man a ffarthing, & who comandett & is in towne & in hele on this maner he shll not come nor do as is aforesaid, he shll pay to the amendment of this gild one pound of wax, and if the dean fail of comanding ilke brother and sister yt is in towne & none comand he shall payen *1d.*—And what brother or sister of this gild be deed in ye contre or in any other place as soon as ye alderman may wit it he shall see the dean warn all the gild bretheren & sisters yt are in Lenn & in hele to go with him to ye church of St. James aforesaid & so sing a messe for him or hir yt is dede as if the body were there present & offer in ye maner aforesaid upon ye paine aforesaid & whoso be not in towne nor offer in ye manner aforesaid nor with the corps where it is buryed he shall pay at next mornspech after a ffarthing, & yt shall be done for the soul of him or hir yt is dede by ye ordeynance of ye alderman and ye officers.—And where yt any of ye bretheren dye in ye countre & any of his bretheren be near him be 10 miles he shll go to ye place where as he is dede & ordeyne & see yt his goods be saved & kept & done for his soul as best is after ye will of him yt is dede upon ye payn of *6s. 8d.*—Also it is ordeynd yt no brother or sister of yis gild shall amerse no emplead either in courte nor in consistorie nor in non other place for no maner of cause till he have revealed his greivance to ye alderman or his deputy & have leive of him upon payn of *2l.* † if ye al-

† surety, perhaps.

† It probably should be *2s.*

derman nor his deputy may not accord hem he shll gife hem leive for to persue ye same yt way they hope best to spede.—And also what brother of this gild yt bete upon or mysay other in contre or in any other place and it may be proved on hym he shall pay to ye amendment of this gild a stone of wax and make amends to hym that he trespass to.—An if any brother or sister of this gilde or other in strange place or in coledge in power or in mischief through theves or other sudeyne || shall releve him after yat his state is in—And whose trespass agst ye alderman or any of ye gilde bretheren in time of mornspech or of drinke or of any other time unskilfullich he shall pay to ye amendment of this gild 6*d.* and make his peace yt he trespasst.—And while the Gild plener drynketh ye alderman shll have every night gallon of ale, either skyvans a pottle, ye clerke a pottle, & ye dean a pottle.—And who is chosen in office of alderman & he forsake his office he shll pay to ye amendment of the gild 20*s.* each skyvan 10*s.* & ye Dean 3*s.* 4*d.* and ye clerke 6*d.* —And the clerke shall have for his travail by ye year 3*s.* \*—And whosoe discover the counseil of this gilde to any strange man or woman shall pay to ye amendment of this gilde 10*s.* without any forgiveness. †—And whosoe enter in the house where the ale lithe without leve of the officers he shall pay to ye amendment of yis gild 4*d.*—Also or-

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|| Here is an illegible word : those that follow also are scarcely intelligible.

\* Our modern clerks are better paid.

† They had secrets, it seems, which they deemed of much importance; but it does not appear of what sort they were.

deynd it is by ye alderman and gild bretheren that the Skyveyns yat shall have ye cattel of this Gild in hand each of ym shall find 2 sureties to bring ye cattel of ye gild every generall mornspech or their sureties for ym & lay it down with the increase thereof afore ye alderman & ye gild brotherg each of ym upon paine of the double yat he have received. —Also it is ordeynd yt ye bretheren of this gild shall be hooded in . . . . . \* every year and have ye use of his hood 2 year, & whosoe refuse his hood or give it away within 2 years shll pay to ye amendment of ye gild 3s. 4d.—Also it is ordeynd yat no brother in time of mornspech shall gone oute of ye Hall † nor stand no roome time of mornspeck no of drynke withouten leve of ye alderman in lettyng of ye officers upon payne of 1lb. of wax.—And also ordeynd is that if any brother of yis gild use snarlings, false weights or measures, or any other such thing that may be reputed as vilany to ye company he shll pay to ye amendment of this gilde 20s. as often sithes as it may be proved on him without any forgiveness.—Also ordeynd it is yt this company shll have a Preist to sing for them, & each bro. & sister shll pay each year to ye costage of ye Preist aforesaid 6d. §—Also it is ordeynd yt after ye bretheren and sisters have dyned togedir on ye generall day ther shall no meles ben holden afterwd but bread & cheese & drink. — Also it is ordeynd yat whosoe will bene a brother of

\* Some word or words seem here wanting.

† This shews that this Gild also had a Hall.

§ Supposing the number of members to be 50, his annual stipend, or salary amounted to only 25s. A chaplain now would expect fifty times that sum, at least.



this Gild he shall not be received by ye alderman & all ye company at ye generall day, & yt he have 2 sufficient sureties of ye gild as well as of his entrance as of his good beryng & honest. —Also it is ordeynd by ye alderman & all ye gild bretheren yt ye alderman shall call up 4 men, which 4 men shll call up 8 men to ym to gone on ye election to chosen ye officers of ye Gild, yt is to say, an alderman, 4 Skyveyns, 1 clerke, & 1 dean, but they shll no man chuse to none of these offices of ym yt are of ye election for yt year, & also what brother rebelleth or letteth ye alderman in ye first 4 calling he shll be fined to ye use of ye company 20s. so often as he so doth. —Also ye election have ordeynd at ye genll mornspech in ye yr of our Lord 1406 yt they yt come in as bretheren shll there take his charge and find sufficient securities for their enterance, yt is to say 13s. 4d. which shll belong to Lenn *holy company* abateing and also they yt bene as bretheren but be lawful for ym with yt subsidy to make ym merry there and if so think to ye company as bene more profit to ye Gild to send home ye money of ye entres of ye bretheren yat come in—Also it is ordeind by ye election ye 1st. day of July year of ye reign of Henry 5th. they have ordeynd that this company shll none have [hoods \*] but at every 2 yrs end.—Also ordeynd yt no man shll have hooding but be paid therefore as cometh thereto.—Also it is ordeynd by ye same election yt wht bro. dye of this company he shll have sung for him 30 messes for his soul so soon as it is known yt he is dead and yt shll be done

\* *Hoods* must have been the word omitted.

after ye old manner of ye alderman & ye officers yt shll be for ye time.—It is ordeynd by ye alderman & all ye bretheren yt what come into ye said Gild shall pay 7s.—Also it is ordeynd by ye election of the company by ye alderman & all ye bretheren yt ye skyveynts shall find all ye costs of ye house.” [Then it is added by way of conclusion, or memorandum,]—”These be ye names of ye ffounders and benefactors of ye Gild of St. Gyles and St. Julian holden in St. Jame’s church in Lenn.”

Edmd. Bellyter, Mercht. Tho. Constantyn, Esq. & Margaret his daughter, William Inot, Mercht. Founders of ye Gild of St. Gyles and St. Julian holden, &c.” [i.e. in St. Jame’s church in Lenne, as before.—Then are added the names of the principal subsequent benefactors, as we may suppose.]—Tho. Hulyett, Mercht. Robt. Braybroke, Mercht. Walter Coney, Mercht. William Wallis, Mercht. William Nicholson, Mercht. Robt. Scryme, & Julian his wife, John Soame, Richd. Evelyn, Mercht. Wm. Amfles, Mercht. John Taylor, Mercer, Richd. Amfles, Mercht.—Special benefactors of ye said Gild, & for all ye bretheren and sisters souls of this said Gild, & for all xn Souls.”

From some notes, in the same volume, immediately following the above long extract, it appears that there was an *Almshouse* connected with the said Gild, or under its patronage, from the first: Also that there was a *charity company*, dwelling in a *Bede house* adjoining to that same Almshouse; which likewise became afterwards connected with the said gild. The Bedehouse

was, probably, the present women's Hospital, still sometimes called *the Bedehouse*; and the Almshouse might stand where Mr. Bonnett's dwelling and school now do. From the same notes it also seems, that the date of the foundation of the said Gild, as given above, must be wrong, owing perhaps to the carelessness of the transcriber, and that it had been founded earlier.—The notes alluded to are the following; which are here inserted, that the intelligent reader may have an opportunity to judge for himself.

“1476. This day comond \* of ye Almeshouse by St. James's & it is agreed that Wm. Walter, Robt. Braybroke, Tho. Constantine, John Bambage, Robt. Bastard, & John Gillom shall have the oversight of the Almeshouse between this and ye genll day to the use of the Gild.

“Also Tho. Constantine on of ye bretheren of this gild as executor to Margaretth his daughter, heir to Edmd. Bellyete hath granted this same day to make a lawful estate of ye said almeshouse in ffee simple to such persons as shall be named by the gild.

“1477. As for ye rule and keeping of ye almeshouse & vestments to be left to ye alderman & 4 of the bretheren.

“1487. Given by ye gild to ye prior towards repairing ye church 6s. 8d. the rest towards repairing ye chappell of St. Julian and ye almeshouse.

“Wheras John Reed, Mercht. has been misguided agst ye alderman and officers, John Goodwin, Mayor,

\* A strange word, whose meaning seems not very easy to ascertain.



& John Bunton, alderman, have ordered he shd pay 6s. 8d. for his broke, which was pd accordingly, but was returned on condition he shd. give to ye Almes-house 2 new pair of sheets, 2s. 4d. the pair.

“1473. Delivered to John Waller a Whystle wt. 12  $\frac{1}{4}$  oz. the gift of Robt. Gring to ye fellowship.

“The sky wants to bear ye charge of ye light before St. Julian.

“The Preist to pray every Sunday for ye bretheren & sisters of ye gild.

“The Alderman to gather in ye debts of ye gild & to have 20d. to ye £. which debt is for repairing ye chapel of ye gild & ye almeshouse.

“Ordered yt ye bretheren shall go about in ye even praying for ye old benefactors, & ye benefactors to be written in ye Gild Book, & ye Bellman to have a list of their names, & yt Thos. Toylet be remembered in ye Bederoll when ye Bellman goeth about.

“1482. Ordered yt ye sisters be received into ye gild paying their dutys without delay & ye said sisters shall go with ye bretheren on ye same daies.

“Such bretheren & sisters as be in poverty & not able to bury youselves shall have the dean & wax at the cost of the Gild so they be clear in the Gild. ‡

“The Alderman to lay out 2*l.* 11*s.* 1*d.* in his hands towards repairing the Alneshouse & beding.

“John Soame, Alderman gave 3*l.* to ye Gild.

“At one of the Generalls there was a vote in ye fellow-

‡ This shews that some of the members of this Gild were poor.

ship for hoods, 42 was for hoods, & only 8 + which wd. have none, whereupon it was agreed they shd. have hooding.

“In the 28th year of the reign of K. Hen. 6th. the Generall mornspech was kept at Corpus Christa [Christi] Hall \* Cyprian Pouleson have taken into ye same fraternity the charity company with the ornaments pertaining to the same.

“These be ye implements pertaining to ye altar of St. Lawrence † in St. James’s Church belonging to the charity company Anno 1533.

ffirst 3 altar clothes 3 pillows a vestment of cloth of Bawdekyn with a cross of cloth of gold in ye midst, a printed Mass Book, 2 latten candlesticks, one altar cloth before ye altar stained, 2 stained curtains, 2 Bulls for pardons, 2 curtains of darnick, a Pall of black wursted, with I. H. S. of gold embroidered, and a cross of white ffustin in ye midst, a crucifix of timber with a foot, a blue say for the Herse, 2 great candlesticks of timber for ye Herse with scallops and 4 iron bars at ye feet, a Horn harnessed with silver.

“N. B. The above Charity Company dwelt in ye Bedehouse adjoining the above Almeshouse.”

“1488. The alderman to have for making his din-

### 3 G

† This Gild consisted then, it seems, of 50 members.

\* By this it appears that the Corpus Christi Gild had a separate Hall, but where it stood does not appear. That Gild seems therefore to have been another of the superior order.

‡ It seems by this that the Gild of St. Lawrence also was one of those of a superior order.

ner on the gild even for the officers & minstrells § 3s. 4d. a Botte of good Ale and 4d. in Bread." \* [A Bill, as it is called, and some memoranda are annexed to this last article in the MS. Volume. They were thought curious, and well worth preserving. The reader will find them in the note below, and will, of course, judge for himself, as to the merit or value of them.] Then follows

*"An Inventory of the ornaments belonging to the Altar of St. Gyles & St. Julian in St. James's Church.*

§ The minstrels, it may be supposed, were employed on their public days, to add to the conviviality, or glee and hilarity of those meetings; which shews the members were not of an uncheerly cast. Minstrels must have been then in no small request at Lynn.

\* "A Bill" [of expences relating to the Almshouse, with memoranda.]

	s.	d.
The Alderman's ffee.....	3.	4.
Mess [Mass] Pence.....	6.	8.
For sowing [sewing] blankets & Sheets.....	0.	8.
A Bucket for the Almeshouse.....	0.	5.
Straw to the Beds.....	0.	3.
To Wm. Lister Almes.....	0.	4.
To Nicholas . . . . Almes.....	0.	8.
To a Mason for a daies work.....	0.	7.
His man.....	0.	4.
Shinks.....	0.	1.
For 3 pair sheets.....	7.	6.
2 pair ditto.....	4.	8.
3 Mattrisses.....	8.	0.
For Mass pence at Oferings.....	4.	0.
For the Hearth making in ye Kitchen.....	1.	0.
For a Lanthorn in the middle of the house.....	0.	7.
For the Bed bottoms.....	1.	1.

Paid for the souls of Nicholas Bardeny Prior of Lynn, Wm. Wattlett, John Dean, and many more, each of them 2s. 6d.

Robt. Soame gave a Load of Oatstraw for repairing their Beds.

Ordered that the Keeper ring the Bell at 6 o'clock at night, & there be prayers daily, & that the Alderman visit the Almeshouse once a month to see that nothing be amiss.



*Imprimis.* A cyprus hanging before the Altar.

Two Pillows, one of portray'd work with the Holy Lamb, another of needlework with an Hart in the midst, Two curtains of stained work with angels.

Two Irons for the Curtains.

An altar-cloth stained with our Lady & her child on her knee.

A stained altar-cloth with the Salutation of our Lady  
Three low candle-sticks latten.

Two altar clothes of plain cloth with crosses of red silk with 8 . . . a Peice & C on the corners of the same clothes & one of red silk in ye middle.

2 Chests of Cyprus wood.

Witnesses Sr. Wm. ffinne, Sr. Richd. Houghton, Sr. Tho. Knights, Priests, with many others.

*“An Inventory of the Jewell belonging to the above gilde.*

	oz.	dwt.
<i>Imprimis.</i> A Chalice of Silver and gilt } with gold Pottant of the same, wt. }	18.	1.
A great Maser with a print of St. George.	46.	0.
A Maser with St. Julian and a Hart in } the bottom with a Scepter. }	18.	0.
A Maser with I. H. S. in the bottom.	13.	0.
A Maser with Rich. Collyns name.	16.	0.
A Horne harnesssed with Silver and gilt } with three feet the same. }	43.	0.
A Scepter silver part gilt with a Christall stone.		
3 Table clothes.		

[Then follows an Inventory of furniture in the *men's* and the *women's Almshouse*.]

“These be the Parcells belonging to the Almshouse  
FOR THE MEN.

*Imprimis. In the first Chamber, called the Schooler's Chamber.* A Mattriss stuffed with . . . . . A Bolster, one pair of Blanketts, one pair of Sheets & one Coverlid white & black.

*In the second Chamber.* A Mattriss 2 Pillows 1 pair of Sheets 1 pair Blanketts & a Coverlett red & yellow.

*In the third Chamber.* A Mattriss a Bolster one pair Blanketts one pair Sheets a Coverlett blue & yellow.

*In the fourth Chamber.* A Mattriss a Bolster one pair Blanketts one pair Sheets & a Coverlett red & white.

*In the fifth Chamber.* A Mattriss a Bolster 1 pair Sheets 1 pair Blanketts a Coverlett black & yellow.

*In the sixth Chamber.* A Mattriss a Bolster a pair Sheets a pair Blanketts & a Coverlett red and yellow.

*In the seventh Chamber.* A Mattriss a pair Sheets a pair Blanketts a Coverlett red & yellow.

#### IN THE WOMEN'S HOUSE.

*First Chamber.* A Mattriss a Bolster a pair Sheets & a Coverlett

*In the second Chamber.* A Mattriss a pair Sheets a Coverlett of red & yellow another Coverlett white & black.

*In the third Chamber.* A Mattriss a Traunsome a pair Sheets a pair Blanketts & a Coverlett red & yellow.

*In the fourth Chamber.* An old Mattriss a Daggeswaine & a Coverlett white & green.

*In the fifth Chamber.* A Mattriss a Transome a pair of Blanketts a pair of Sheets a Coverlett red and yellow another red & green,

*In the sixth Chamber.* A Mattriss a Bolster a Blankett Lincy wolley a Coverlett red & black lined with woodmill.

*Implements.* A fforme with 2 ffeet, a Rake of iron, a Joiner's Table, a Lanthorn to hang in the middle of the house.

*To the Well—*A Buckett hooped with Iron, a Boile of Iron, a Chain of Iron with 9 lincks with a swivell of Iron,

*Implements belonging to the WOMEN's House.*

	lb.	oz.
<i>Imprimis.</i> A Brass Pott wt,	2.	10.
An old Brass Pott wt,	9.	0.
An old Brass Pott,	1.	0.
An old Brass Pott,	1.	10.
A little Pott.	5.	10.
A Kettle without a Boile,	7.	0.
3 old Pans.	5.	0.
A Pewter dish.	1.	10.

3 old fformes, 2 old small Joiner's stools.

An old little Stoole, an old Table with 4 ffeet, an old Joiner's chair.

*In the Kitchin—* Imprimis. A gridiron, 1 pair Cobb-irons, 1 hanging Brandlett, 2 Spitts, a chopping knife, A hanging Lanthorn with an Iron Chain & three ffeet."

[To the above is immediately added the following regulation relating to the said alms-house.]



“The keeper of the Almshouse to Ring the Bell every night from Hallowmass to Candlemass at 6 of Clock at night & lett in ye poor folks, & lock'd [lock] in ye door all night: & likewise to Ring the Bell again at 7 of Clock in ye morn, & then to let them out: & in summer from Candlemass to Hallowmass to Ring & shutt in ye doors at 8 of clock at night & open them at 5 of the morning.”--The account of St. Gyles & St. Julian's Gild is closed with the following remarkable & curious

“*Memorandum.* John, bishop of Ledence, have granted to every brother & sister of the fraternity or Gild of St. Gyles & St. Julian, holden at St. James's Church in Lynn, that at the time or season that any manner of person or persons do intend to drink in St. Julian's Horn \* with good devotion, are granted by the said bishop, as often as they do, 40 days pardon, which grant was confirmed by the same bishop in the mansion place of John Baxter of Lynn, Grocer, in the presence of Cyprian Pouleson, alderman, the said John Baxter, Thomas Brampton, & other men the 5th day of August in ye yr of our Lord 1532 in the 24th yr of K. H. 8. John Powis, Mayor, & my Lord of Norwich Richd. Pykk [Nykk] then bishop did visit the same time.—The said John bishop [of Ledence] was then suffragan † to my Lord West bishop of Ely.”

From these Extracts it is very evident that the above

\* This is the only mention we have met with of *Saint Julian's Horn*, the history of which, no doubt, would be very amusing, if it could be recovered.

† This shews that even our suffragan bishops assumed the power of

fraternity of St. Gyles and St. Julian must have stood high among our ancient Gilds. It consisted, it seems, of divers opulent members, who did honour to their feelings by the attention which they paid to the wants and sufferings of their indigent neighbours of both sexes: for we find that there were two Almeshouses, one for poor *men*, and another for poor *women*, under their patronage, and supported by them, if not also founded by them. On this account we ought to respect their memory, papists as they were; for this part of their conduct was, surely, very commendable and exemplary. Such a conduct is worthy of respect and commendation wherever it is seen: among papists as well as protestants; and even among mahometans or heathens as well as christians. There are Almeshouses still at Lynn, but we know not that they owe much, if any thing, to the bounty or liberality of any of our present opulent families, or to any of their immediate, or even remote progenitors. They were endowed by wealthy families or individuals of other times, whose descendants have long disappeared. Our modern men of wealth are otherwise disposed: and our Allens, our Bagges, our Bowlers, and our Cases, have lived and died without exhibiting any symptoms of feelings like those that appeared in the charitable fraternity of St. Gyles and St. Julian. If the latter were also in other matters weak and superstitious, that was perhaps unavoidable by people in their circumstances. We have our weaknesses and superstitions too, and those, probably, much less excusable,

granting indulgences, or licences to sin with impunity, on such conditions as they chose to prescribe.

considering our superior advantages, than those of the brethren and sisters of the said Gild. Instead, therefore, of decrying, or pitying their failings, we ought to blush for our own.

Furthermore, it is observable of the above brotherhood, that they consisted of *good men and able, and of good conversation*. (see p. 423.) So careful were they on this head, that every member at his admission was obliged to find *two sureties*, who were to answer for the due performance of his engagement to the gild, and also to testify of his *good beryng and honest*, or that he was a person of irreproachable moral character. (see p. 426.) We are not certain that our modern *protestant* Gilds, the benefit societies, &c. are equally careful that those whom they receive among them be persons of good report, or blameless conversation. It would certainly be very creditable to them.—The said gild also appeared anxious to support a respectable religious character, and promote, what they deemed, the practice of piety among themselves: hence they had their proper chaplain or religious functionary, as was before noticed. Indeed they seemed as if desirous to be thought to excel in this department, as is pretty plainly indicated, by their assuming the name of the *Lenn holy company*, which may be thought to smell a little pharisaical. However that was, as they possessed so many good qualities, and deserved well of their neighbours and fellow citizens, we can do no less than dismiss or take our leave of them respectfully.



SECTION. IV. *Account of the Gilds continued.*

After St. Gyles and St. Julian's Gild, the next, in the Catalogue, is that of *St. Ethelered*, or *Ethelred*. Of this Gild we have met with no particular account; and but little more of the next to it, that of *St. Margaret*: Parkin just mentions that it was founded in the 8th. of Henry IV. a patent being granted by that monarch for that purpose. \* Of *St. Anne's* Gild, the 7th. in the Catalogue, Parkin only says, that there was here such a Gild, as appears by the inquisition taken in the 3rd. of Elizabeth. He also queries, if there was not a chapel dedicated to St. Anne, somewhere near the Fort which still bears her name? † which seems very reasonable to suppose. Of the next, the Gild of the 12 *Apostles*, we have met with no further account; nor yet of that which immediately succeeds it, the Gild of *St. Christopher*.

Of the 10th. Gild, that of *our Lady*, the following mention is made by Parkin—"These are the brethren and sisters of the Guild *Tigulat*. founded to the honour and purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, *ao.* 3. Edward III.—Thomas de Langham, and Christian his wife; Charles de Secheford, and Alice his wife; Robert de Derby, and Margery his wife; William, son of the said Robert, &c. [The names of the rest are not given.] Robert seems to be alderman of the Guild.—These are the four Morwespeches of the said Guild: the first morwespeche is on the Sunday [*le Dymeynge prochain*] after the purification of the blessed Virgin,

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\* Parkin, 130.

† Ibid. 141.

the second on the day of the annunciation of our Lady, the third on the day of the assumption of our Lady, the fourth on the conception of our Lady.—It is ordained that if any of the brethren be summoned on any of the four morwespeches, and are in the said town, and make default, they shall pay *ld.* to the honour of our Lady.” \*

This Gild, as the above writer hints, had its Alderman, † and likewise, probably, all the other kind of officers mentioned in the account of St Gyles and St. Julian's Gild; with laws also somewhat alike those of that fraternity; but its records relating to those matters having all perished, nothing more can be said on those heads.—The chapel of our Lady, which belonged to this Gild, or to which the gild belonged, was not that *by the bridge*, to which it gave name, but that *on the mount*, which was formerly a very noted place in this town, both for its curious architecture and its reputed sanctity—the offerings there sometimes exceeding those of all our other holy places. But more of these matters when we come to treat of the religious houses.

Of the five Gilds, mentioned in the Catalogue next after that of *our Lady*, namely those of *St. Michael the Archangel*, *St. Nicholas*, *St. Audrey*, *St. Michael and King Henry*, and *St. Cyprian*, no particular information has been obtained. We therefore know not how they were constituted, or what were the particular objects of their respective confederations. That

\* Parkin, 142.

† Those of the Gilds seem to be the only aldermen of Lynn in those days. see page 395.

the members of all or of any of them were as useful and respectable in their generation as those of St. Gyles and Julian can neither be affirmed nor denied. They might be all very good sort of people, in their way, for aught we know. But we may without any breach of charity suppose they had their full share of childish credulity and stupid superstition. These were the predominant failings of their time, of which, however, even our own time, and with all its boasted advantages and improvements, is not yet quite clear. We must therefore suppose, that they readily and implicitly believed all the marvellous monkish tales which were then propagated, especially those that particularly related to their respective tutelary or patron saints. The members of *St. Audrey's Guild*, for instance, would all readily believe the extraordinary and miraculous virtues ascribed to her wonderful *Smock* at *Thetford*: and those of *our Lady's Guild* would no less readily believe the wonderful accounts of her *appearances* to divers persons in the very same town. Thetford being so nigh to Lynn, and in the same county, the miracles pretended to have been worked there would soon be reported and credited here; and those, especially, that were ascribed to *St. Audrey* and *Our Lady*, would be so among the members of those Lynn Gilds which bore their names. \*

## 3 H 2

\* Of St. Audrey and her *smock*, and our Lady and her *appearances* at Thetford, some account may be found in Martin's History of that town. Speaking of the church of St. Audrey, he says, it was of but small revenue, but that a famous relique made ample amends to the priest for the smallness of his stipend. He then introduces the following extract from *Bacon's Reliques of Rome*, fol. 181.—“In Thetford, a Mayor town in Norfolk, there was a parish church, now destroyed, called St. Audrise.



The sixteenth Gild in the above Catalogue is that of *St. Fabian* and *St. Sabestian*, or *Sebastian*, of which the following account is given by Parkin—"At a col-

In this church among other reliques, was a *smock* of *St. Audrise*, which was there kept as a great Jewel and precious Relique. The virtue of that *smock* was mighty and manifold, but specially in putting away the toothach and swelling of the throte: so that the paciente was first of all shriven and hard masse, and did such oblations as the priest of the church enjoined."—The Vulgar supposed this relique to be so full of sacred virtue, that they ordered, in their Wills, certain persons to go in pilgrimage to it for the salvation of their souls. Margaret Whoop, of East Harling, had the following clause in her Will, which was dated 1501: "I will that another man go in pilgrimage for me to Thetford, and offer for me to *St. Audrey's Smock*."—See Martin's Thetford, p. 79.—Nothing is more probable than that this same smock, in those days, drew many a pilgrim from Lynn to Thetford.

Of the blessed Virgin's *appearances* to divers persons at Thetford, one was to a woman who had lost the use of her tongue, but whom she cured the same time. The person who asserted and recorded this was a monk. The same monk has prefaced his account of another of the Virgin's miracles at Thetford in the following notable and curious manner. "I have thought proper to relate a most remarkable miracle, because of its tendency to exemplify the mercy of *God*, and to exhibit the praise of *his mother*, and is most worthy of public attention; for whatever tends to the Glory of *God*, and relates to his mother, is not to be concealed or denied, but to be received as matter of fact."—[Then comes the marvellous tale—] "William Heddrich, junr. carpenter, and Isabella his wife, lived in a town of Norfolk, called Hockham. They had a child 3 years old, who in harvest time was carried with them into the field, as was customary with peasants who went to their day labour. On a certain day about sun setting, the child happened to be sleepy, and actually fell into a sound sleep on the edge of the field where his parents were reaping. In the dusk of the evening, a man driving his cart along that side of the field where the child lay, unfortunately the wheel went over the child's head, unknown to the driver, and killed him on the spot. The father of the child was following the cart when the accident happened. He took the child up in his arms, and finding him dead and besmeared with his own blood, he made bitter lamentations. He then ran to an eminent surgeon in the same town, who had healed many who had laboured under various infirmities, by the sovereign efficacy of his medicines. After the surgeon had minutely examined the child, he found no symptoms of life; but he advised the father to carry it home, and the next day prepare for its funeral.

loquium, or general meeting (in the reign of Henry VII.) of this Guild, held in St. George's Hall, on Sunday next after the feast of St. Fabian and St. Sebastian, September 2, John Nicholl was chosen alderman; John Johnson, William Manning, Robert Bachelor, William Whithed, scabins; clerk of the guild, Thomas Haw,—dean, John Gyles. The chattels of the guild in the scabins keeping.—It was then ordained, That the skevinths shal bere all as they have done before tyme;—Also that the said skevens shall have of every brother, on the general day, as many as dine there 2*d.* and the morspect 1*d.*—Also ordained, that Thomas Rudwell and John Lowyn shall bere the ded money: and Thomas Rudwell received 9*s.* the said John Lowyn received 9*s.* Also that the said Thomas and John, shall give for occupying of the ded money, by yere, 11*s.* 8*d.*—Also

When the father had heard the opinion of the surgeon, and was convinced that he was deprived of his child, with heart full of grief he took up the corpse and went to his house, and delivered it to his wife, that she might lay it on the bed. Then he assembled his friends and neighbours together, in order to watch that night, as was customary before a funeral. Being thus met they devoted themselves to watching, and with the greatest ardour of devotion prayed to the blessed *mother of God*, vowing that, if by her intercession the child should be restored to life, they would go on a pilgrimage naked to the image of the blessed virgin, in the church of the monks in Thetford, and there make the usual offering. When they had made an end of their prayers and vows, about midnight, the child revived. Those that were present, when they beheld the happy effect of their prayers, praised and blessed God. And, to perform their vows, they took the child, and carried it before the image of the blessed virgin, and fulfilled the obligation they had put themselves under.”—see Appendix to Martin's Thetford, p. 83.—Such were some of the pious and popular tales of other times, in the parts about Lynn: but before we affect to pity the credulous weakness and miserable stupidity of our ancestors, who could receive them, let us be careful that we ourselves are free from similar failings, or from other failings equally inexcusable and disgraceful.

ordained the electioners \* shall find to the encrease of the company and in the worchep of God and the seynt, the furst morspech; the alderman shall find the second with the help of the feloshep, that he may have to the profits of the seynt.—Also, that the skevens shall bere the 3 morspechs, beside the general day, accordyng to the beforeseid.”—The above seems to be taken from some old record relating to this gild; Parkin then adds—“I find at this time several men and women admitted brethren and sisters, the men paying 2s. admission, and the woman 1s. Among them Domps. Robs. Metford, *monachus*, and paid 2s. and prior William Lobbis, or Cobbis, 2s. It was a mean Guild. At one Colloquium I find expended in lervis. 9d. in pane 3d. in casu & carn. 3d. *Colloq. tent. in aula Hen. Bretenham, Die Dominic. prox. post fest. sce. Cather. Ao. Hen. VII. 3º* ——*Colloq. Gen.* on the feast of St. Fabian and St. Sebastian, Ao. 3, Hen. VII. John Nichol chose alderman, &c. when it was ordered that there should be kept 2 morspech in the yere, besides the general, and that the skevens shall have of every brother and sister of the general day, as many as dine and sup, 2d. and the morspech-pence.—*Colloq. Gen.* in St. George’s Hall on Sunday next after the feast of St. Fabian and St. Sebastian Henry. VII. 4º Robert Johnson chose alderman: ordered that there be bert one morspech in the year, besides the general day, this morspech to be kept the Sunday before St. Margaret’s day—ordered that the brethren and sisters dyne and sup

\* The electioners, this year, who chose the Alderman and Scabins, were 8 persons deputed.



together, and pay every brother and sister that dine and sup 1*d.* and the morspech 1*d.* when it appeared that they had goods and chattels belonging to them.--Ordered that the clerk's, wages shall be 12*d.* and the dean 10*d.* *per annum*, † and we will that John Sturmyne shall bere the perk money for to find the perk lights.—*Dna. Alice Belle*, a recluse, entered and paid 1*s.*—1492. Adam Mylke then alderman—Henry Bretenham chose alderman, 1492, after Mylke, when I find children entered brothers and sisters, under age.--*Dompn. Geor.* . . . prior of Lyn entered brother 1495.—*Mem.* that the alderman gave a drinking the first Sunday in May, and 3*s.* 4*d.* was gathered and delivered to the alderman, to be delivered the next general day to the brethren again, with his good devotion to God, and to the good holy seynt, and in encressin of the Gyld.—At a drinking, on Sunday next after Allhallowsmass, at John Bevies smith, gathered 2*s.* 4*d.* for the perk money.—*Dnus.* Nicholas Berdency, intrat. Ao. 4 Henry. VII. The Morspech held on Relick Sunday 1490. Robert Johnson, alderman; —In the 7th of Henry VII. Ad. Mylke alderman; ordered that every brother, on the next morrow after the general, shall wait on the alderman for the time being, at our Lady of the mount, \* at nine of the clock, and there every brother to offer then, and what brother come not, without a lawful excuse, shall pay at the next morspech following after the general, half a pound of wax, without any grace, and he that come not, to send his offering, and every brother having a wife, or sister, they to offer betwixt them

† What wages!      \* There to play an anteme of our Lady.

a halfpenny.—This general held sunday 22d of January.—In 1492, Adam Mylke occurs alderman; chose on Sunday after St. Fab. and the feast in St. George's Hall.—Adam Mylke, alderman, 1493.—In 1493, there seems to be 38 of this guild, the morspech pence being 3s. 2d.—In 1493 the second paid at their dinner and supper, by every brother 1d. to the Gild and 1d. to the scovyns, a brother and his wife 3d.—1d. to the gyld and 2d. to the schevens.—In the 10th of Henry VI [VII.] Henry Bretenham chose alderman, on Sunday next after St. Fabian and St. Sebastian, and occurs 1495. Ordered that the skyvens on the day of St. Fabian and St. Sebastian, or one of them, come to the church, and do ring none, and see that the candles about and afore the awter be light, at evening and at service, on the day, on pain of dim. lib. of wax, each of them to the lightward; and I find 4 minstrells belong to them and brethren. —In the 13 of Henry VII. Bretenham occurs alderman.—The altar light, perk, &c. kept by the guild, and that of the bason, and the dead.—In 1500 H. Bretenham, Mayor; and 1501, H. Bretenham, alderman; and 1502, and 1503.—In the 2d of Henry VIII. Thomas French, late alderman, died.—In the 4th. of Henry VIII. Robert Baker, chose alderman.”—Such is the account we have of St. Fabian and St. Sebastian's Gild. As it had *goods and chattels* belonging to it, it was probably dissolved at the reformation, like all others so circumstanced. Parkin calls it a *mean gild*: it might perhaps be so, compared with some of the wealthier ones; but there is reason to believe that it was superior to some of the

others. It had its *company of minstrels*, which may be thought to answer to a modern *band of music*, and seems to indicate that this society was not among our meanest or lowest gilds. The number of its members in the reign of Henry VIII. Parkin reckons to consist of 38, by the amount of the morspech pence; but if the officers were exempted, from that payment, they might be no less than 45.—However that was, this gild in its day might answer some very useful purposes.

Of the two Gilds named, in the catalogue, next after that of St. Fabian and St. Sebastian, namely, those of *St. Lawrence and St. Agnes*, nothing is known but the names: all the rest seems to have gone long ago into irrecoverable oblivion.—Of the next, the 19th Gild, that of *Corpus Christi*, something more is known. Both Parkin and Mackerell have made some mention of this ancient fraternity. The former speaks of it as follows—“Licence was granted that John de Brunham, and John Waryn, of Lenn, might give one messuage, 75*s.* 7*d.* ob. rent, with the appurtenances in Lenn, and that Richard Dun might give the rent of 12*d.* and the profit of one passage-boat beyond the port of the village of Lenn, with the appurtenances, to Thomas de Couteshale, master of the said guild, [as I take it] and the aforesaid John and Richard might give to Thomas de Couteshale, one Shop and one solar, with the appurtenances in the said Village, which Thomas de Couteshale holds.—John de Brunham, John de Perteneye, and Adam Skert, burgess of Lynn, grant, &c. to Jef-



frey Talboth, Thomas Botekysham, John de Dockyn, &c. 2s. which they used to receive of the heirs of John de Syssewell of West Lenne, for the liberty of a ferry, of a passage-boat over the water.—Dated at Lenn Bishop on Sunday after the feast of the purification of the blessed virgin, in the 3d. of Richard II.—Jeffrey Talboth then mayor:—Witnesses John de Tyteleshale, Roger Paxam, &c. ”\*—Hence it appears that this Gild had goods and chattels, was in possession of a ferry boat, &c. And must have been a fraternity of some consequence. From Mackerells account it seems to be one of the commercial, or mercantile gilds; what he says of it is contained in the following passage—“*Of the Company of Merchants of CORPUS CHRISTI, their agreement, and for what.*—This Indenture made witnesseth, that John Pygot, burgeis, merchant of Lynne Byshope, Master of the company of Corpus Christi in Lynne aforeseid, hath delivered to William Marche, Wex-Chandeler of Lynne C and vi lb (i.e. 106 lb.) in clene wex v<sup>xx</sup> and xii lb. (i.e. 112 lb. for the hundred) and in torches half an c and xxi lb. of wex and in x grete chapterell xvii lb. and half a lb. of wex and Rosyn, and in smale chapterell xi lb. Wex and Rosyn: To have the kepyng of the same weight of Wex duryng the terme of x yeers. The seid William to fynde every yeer duryng hys seid Terme, as welle all the lyghtes about the Tabernacle of Corpus Christi, in the Chirche of Seynt Margaret in Lynne, as the lyghtes of all the torches which the seid Company spendeth or shal spende every yeer duryng the seid Terme. And the seid

\* Parkin, 145.

William to sette up every yeer the Heerse of the said Company in the chirch before-seid, and take it downe upon his owne costs and expens, as it hath ben doon and used aforne this tyme; and in the ende of the seid Terme the seid William to deliver ageyn the seid Weyght of Wex Torchis and Chapterell to the Mayster of the said Company for the tyme beeng, for the which Lyght-making, and fyndyng every yeer, the seid William shall have of the Maister and Company V Marks and X shillings of good money of Ingland to be paid to the seid William every yeer in the utasse of the feste of Corpus Christi. Into Witnesse hereof, the partyes aforesaid to these Indentures alternatly have sette their seales. Written at Lynn foreseid on Wednysday the feste of Seynt Gregory the Pope, the yeer of the reigne of King Henry the sixth after the Conquest xxvii. ” \* —

From this last extract it is very evident that the Society of Corpus Christi made no mean figure among the Lynn gilds. The *Tabernacle* of Corpus Chisti, † in the church of St. Margaret, belonged to this Gild, and must have been attended with considerable expense, both in its formation, and the subsequent charges which it occasioned, for the lights that were there kept, &c. Indeed we are expressly told that they were a *company of merchants*, and therefore we need not wonder that they were, and could afford to be at more expense than most of the others. In short, we may pretty safely con-

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\* Mackerell's History of Lynn, 254. — what the last expression, *after the conquest*, means, seems difficult to make out.

† Of this *Tabernacle* the author regrets that he can give no particular account. The above extract is the only record where he has met with any mention of it—It was probably a rich shrine enclosing an image of our Saviour.

clude that this must have been one of our most opulent Gilds. Had we known more of its history we might be able to record some of its good deeds, and prove that it deserved an honourable remembrance; but as that is not the case, our account of it must be here concluded.

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SECTION V. *Account of the holy Trinity Company, or great merchants' Gild.*

Of all the Lynn gilds, that which assumed the name of *Trinity*, and is the 20th in the Catalogue, appears to have been by far the most eminent and opulent. It had very considerable possessions, in houses, lands, and other sorts of property; and there is still preserved a more particular and full account of this gild than of most, or indeed of any of the rest: of which its large landed property may be one principal reason, as that could not well be conveyed into other hands without some mention of its original or former possessors, and such mention too as would be likely to be long remembered. Most, if not all the property of this mercantile company, and particularly what consisted in houses and lands, was, at the reformation, when the company was dissolved, vested in the corporation, and still constitutes a great part, or most, of their property of that description. The best account of this gild, that we know of, is contained in a MS. volume which once belonged to the



late Henry Partridge Esq. but is now in the possession of our venerable townsman Thomas Day Esq. who has very obligingly favoured the present writer with the use of it. This account extends much further than that given in Parkin's printed History of Lynn, though it seems to have been originally drawn up by the same hand, and transcribed from the papers of that eminent antiquary, with his consent, by the procurement of the late Mr. Partridge, in 1749.—We learn from the printed account, as well as from that in manuscript, that though this gild is *said* to have been *founded* by king JOHN, at the request of his great favourite, bishop De Grey, yet that, in fact, it existed long before that time, as appears by an answer to a certain writ of enquiry in the reign of Richard II. so that what is called *founding* it *then*, seems to mean no more than that monarch's giving it his royal sanction, or taking it under his king-ly patronage: and we know not how far that proved of material benefit to the institution. The interference and patronage of statesmen have not always proved favourable to commercial prosperity. But we will now proceed to lay before the reader the account which we have obtained of this gild.

“John de Grey bishop of Norwich persuaded \* king

\* At p. 39. of the said MS volume, speaking of the people of Lynn, the writer says, “John de Grey, bishop of Norwich, was their great friend and benefactor: in 1207 he gave king John a palfrey, in order to have Duplicates of the Charter which he had obtained for his town of Lynn, it being owing to this bishop that Lynn ever had a charter, as the original one of king John now in the custody of that corporation testifies: the whole, or chief liberties of that town being before that time in the bishop.” [De Grey confirmed the royal charter against his own successors ]

John to found the guild of the holy Trinity at Lynn; the brethren of which were bound, under the penalty of a gallon of wine, to have Mass celebrated every Trinity Sunday, in St. Margaret's Church, for the souls of the said king and bishop.—It was called the *great* Guild of the holy Trinity in Lynn, in respect to other less guilds in the same town; the head or chief person of this guild, or fraternity, was stiled, the Alderman, or Custos, and was chose by the commonalty of the said town, and continued so on that choice for life, unless upon account of any great infirmity or inability, or some other reasonable cause, he was set aside and removed.

“This Guild was said to have *its rise and beginning* before the reign of king John, as appears from the answer of Thomas Botesham, alderman of it, and his brethren, in the time of Richard II. to a writ of enquiry of that king relating to its foundation, authority, &c. that its origin was not known, that king John, considering the great concourse of merchants to this town, granted the alderman that then was, and the commonalty and their successors, by Letters patents, bearing date in his sixth year, that they might have a guild of merchants in the said town: and Henry III. son to the said king John, by his Letters patents, granted one of their own body and community to be mayor of the said town, which said mayor and alderman for the time being, should always have the rule and government of it; and which said alderman, in the vacancy of a mayor, or in the absence of the mayor from the said town, should have the rule and government of the said community, as the alderman

and his predecessors, the aldermen of the said town, had and enjoyed.

“As to *their possessions*, &c. they are thus returned to the aforesaid enquiry, That they had a place called the Common Staith with its appurtenances, valued at 42*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* per annum clear, besides all reprises, That the goods and chattels of the aforesaid Guild amount in the whole to 260*l.* 13*s.* viz. in ready money 60*l.* 13*s.* In divers merchandize 200*l.* and that in many books, vestments, chalices, and other ornaments for the chaplains of the said Guild performing Divine service as well in the parish church as in the chapels † annexed to the said church, and that in wax for lights in the said church and chapels, in the honour and laud of the holy Trinity, yearly found, and for torches at the funerals of poor brethren, &c. of the said Guild, and that out of the profits of the common Stathe, and out of the goods and chattels aforesaid, together with diverse goods and chattels bequeathed and left to the said Guild ; the alderman, &c. sustain and find *thirteen chaplains*, daily and yearly to pray, as well for the king, his ancestors, and for the peace and welfare of his kingdom, as for the souls of all the aldermen, brethren, and benefactors of the said Gild, also for the souls of all the faithful deceased: *six* of which officiated in the church of St. Margaret aforesaid, *four* in the chapel of St. Nicholas, and *three* in the chapel of St. James in Lenne, who all day, as they are stated and appointed in the church and chapels aforesaid, celebrate high mass, by note, and on Sundays

† St. Nicholas and St. James.



and other festival days, celebrate mass at Mattins, and at Vespers, by note ; and if any of the aforesaid chaplains neglects his duty and office, or is not of an honest life and conversation, when he has been admonished by the alderman, and does not amend, he is removed from the service, and the said alderman appoints another able and honest one in his place. And further, that out of the profits of the said Common-Stath, goods and chattels aforesaid, many almsdeeds and works of charity were yearly given, which, one year with another, are computed at 30*l.* viz. towards the support of the poor brethren of the said guild, to the blind, lame, and other distressed persons, to poor clerks keeping school, and poor religious houses, as well of men as women, to the lepers in and about Lenne, and in the repairs &c. of the parish church and chapels aforesaid, and in the ornaments of the same, together with the alms given to the four orders of friers in Lenne, and to the maintaining of several aqueducts for the use of the said town: all the goods and chattels aforesaid are in the hands of the said alderman, and of four men of the said guild, called skivins, \* who yearly distribute the said goods as aforesaid: and further, that the brethren of the said guild never had nor used any one suit of livery, either in their vestments or hoods.”†—The following were the *Rules and Ordinances of this Gild.*

1. “If any stranger is willing to enter into the fraternity, he ought to pledge into the hands of the alderman

\* Skivins, Skivini, or Scabini, were the custodes, guardians, governors, or stewards.

† Mr. Day’s MS. volume, 48, and Parkin, 148.

100s. *et jus p' dict. domus; scil.* to the alderman 4*d.* to the clerk 2*d.* to the dean 2*d.* and afterwards out of the 100s. pledged with the alderman and his brethren, *ad melius. . . . poterit*, and shall immediately give one sextary \* of wine, viz. 10*d.* †

2. If any brother has a son, or sons, legitimate, who are willing to enter into the said fraternity, each one ought to pay for his entrance 4*s.* the aforesaid right being excepted.

3. Whoever will enter into the said fraternity, ought on the first day of his admission to wait and serve before the alderman and the brethren, honourably, in neat clothes, and § . . . of gold or silver.

4. The alderman to have, on the day of Pentecost, one sextary of wine, and the dean half a sextary, the clerk half, and each of the skivens ‡ the same day half a sextary, and every day after as long as the drinking shall continue, the alderman shall have half a sextary, the dean, clerk, and each of the Skivins one gallon, and each of the attendants half a gallon, at evening.

5. If any of the brethren shall disclose to any stranger the counsels of the said guild, to their detriment, without

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\* A sextary was an ancient measure, said to be a pint and half, but it appears here, from the price &c. to be much more, and was *four gallons.* † *Four Gallons* of Wine sold then for 10*d.*

§ The word obliterated was probably *serta*, a coronet [or chaplet.]

‡ The skivins were *four* in number, as appears from a deed of Thomas bp. of Ely in the 25th of Henry VI. Simon Pigot, Richard Cosyn, Thomas Benet, and William Pilton, then called therein, custodes sive scabins, &c. They served, as I take it, in all, two years, the seniors going off yearly, when two others were chosen &c. they had the charge &c. as appears. of the goods and effects of the guild.—*Parkin.*

the assent of the alderman and his brethren, he shall forfeit the sum of 32 pence

6. If any of the brethren shall fall into poverty, or misery, all the brethren are to assist him by common consent out of the chattels of the house, or fraternity, or of their proper own.

7. If any brother should be impleaded, either within Lenne or without, the brethren there present ought to assist him in their council, if they are called, to stand with him and counsel him without any costs; and if they do not, they are to forfeit 32 pence.

8. None of the brethren is to come into the guild before the alderman and his brethren with his cap or hood on, or barefoot, or in any rustick manner, if he does he is to be amerced 4 pence.

9. If any one should sleep at the guild, either at the general meeting or at their feasts and drinking, he is to forfeit 4 pence.

10. If any one turns him rudely to his brother, or calls him by any rude name, [he is] to be amerced 4 pence.

11. If any one is called and cited at a prime (or general meeting) and does not come before the issue of the first consult, he is to pay 1*d.* by order of the dean; and if he refuses and sits down, he is to be amerced 4 pence.

12. If any one should be cited to the prime, and shall be found in the town, or shall come late to the drinking, and the dean shall say to him to be there at the next prime, and he does not come before they begin to take



judgments of defaults, he shall either make some reasonable excuse, or pay 12*d.* and if he comes before the defaults are adjudged, and shall depart without leave, shall pay 12*d.*

13. If any one of this house shall buy any thing, and a brother shall come in unexpectedly before the agreement, \* or at it, he ought to be a partner with him that buy, and if the buyer refuses it, he is to be amerced half a mark.

14. If any servant of the brethren comes at the drinking, or the prime, he is to lay down the cap and cloak, and give it to the janitor to keep, whilst he enters and speaks to his master, and then he is to depart forthwith: if it is at the drinking, let him drink once or twice, provided he does not sit, and then he is to depart, and if he does not, his master is to be amerced.

15. If any one refuse to obey the precept of the alderman, or dean, for the honour and profit of the house, he is to be amerced 12*s.*

16. If any poor brother shall dye, the alderman and brethren shall see that his body be honourably buried, of the goods, or chattels of the house, or out of alms, if he has not wherewith to bury himself.

17. If the alderman shall dye, none belonging to him, neither son, or any other can act in any thing as alder-

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\* Ante palmatam. Hence we may perceive the old custom of shaking hands at an agreement or bargain. [Striking hands is still customary in some places in making bargains; the buyer holds his hand open, and the seller strikes it with open hand; whence they are said to have *struck a bargain.*]

man but the brethren may choose a new alderman whom they please.

18. If any brother shall dye, the dean is to summons all the brethren to make their offerings for the soul of the deceased; and if any one is absent, he is to give one halfpenny at the next prime following, for the soul of the defunct, and the dean is to have 4*d.* of the alms collected for citing the brethren.

19. If any brother, or alderman shall act contrary to the ordinances of this house, he is either to forfeit his brotherhood, or pay half a mark for the good of the house.

20. No one shall intrude himself while the drinking continues.

21. If any brother shall offend another brother, in word or deed, he shall make no complaint but to the alderman first, and the mayor; if he does not, he is to be amerced half a mark.

22. If the skivins shall merchanize with the chattels of the house, no brother shall have any part therein, but the whole profit to go to the use of the guild.

23. The skivins are to swear, when they receive the chattels of the house, that they will employ the same faithfully to the good of the guild, and will fully account and answer for the profit.

The following additional articles are given, in the said MS. volume, as *Usages and Customs* of the gild.

[1.] There are four meetings of the alderman and his brethren (viz.) The *first* on Friday in the first week of

Lent, to settle and order their alms and other works of charity. The *second* on Friday next before the feast of the holy Trinity, to choose the officers of the said Guild, (viz.) the skivins, and to settle and take the accounts of them that are then removed. The *third* on the vigil and day of the holy and undivided Trinity, to the laud and honor thereof at the vespers of the said feast, to have placebo \* and dirige † decently and honourably performed, for the souls of all the ancestors of our lord the king, all the aldermen and brethren of the said guild, all their benefactors and faithful deceased: and on the feast of the said festival to have the solemn masses, as well of the said festival, as the masses of requiem for the souls aforesaid, and to make their offerings for the same. The *fourth* on the Friday next after the feast of the exaltation of the holy cross, ‡ to look into the state of the said guild, and to receive the arrears, if any were left in the hands of the skivins of the foregoing years, and to dispose and order the goods and chattels of the said guild.

[2.] If any brother of the said guild shall dye in the said town, another brother of the same, deputed by the alderman shall appoint 12 torches to be at the funeral of the said deceased; and further every brother of the guild in town, shall be warned to make his offering for the deceased, at the mass that is celebrated on the day of the burial.

[3.] If any of the aforesaid brethren shall dye in the said town or elsewhere, as soon as knowledge thereof

\* Psalm 116. † It probably should be *Dirge*. ‡ 11th. of September.



shall come to the alderman, the said alderman shall order solemn Mass to be celebrated for him, at which every brother of the said guild, that is in town, shall make their offering; and further, the alderman shall make every chaplain of the said guild, immediately on the death of any brother, to say 30 Masses for the deceased.

[4.] The alderman and skivins of the said guild are by duty obliged to visit, four times a year, all the infirm, all that are in want, need, or poverty, and to minister to, and relieve all such, out of the alms of the said guild.

[5.] If any brother shall become poor and needy, he shall be supported in food and cloathing, according to his exigency, out of the profits of the lands and tenements, goods and chattels of the said guild.

[6.] If any one has a desire and is willing, for the honour of the holy Trinity, to be received into the said guild, that he may be partaker of the alms and benefactions thereof, he shall give to the said guild a certain sum of money to the maintenance of the said alms and benefactions according to what shall be agreed upon by the alderman and brethren thereof.

[7.] If any brother has a son, or sons, after his entrance into the guild, lawfully born and begotten, especially if such be of good and honest fame and conversation, they are to be received every one of them into the said guild, if he so thinks well, four shillings each.

[8.] No born slave, \* or one of such like condition,

\* *Nativus servus* — [This seems to do little credit to the feelings, or to the memory of these rich gild brethren: Why should any sober,

nor any apprentice can be received, and if any one of suchlike condition should be received into the said guild, the alderman and his brethren not knowing it, when it is truly and lawfully proved, such a one shall lose the benefit of the said guild.

[9.] No one until he arrive at the age of 21 years, and is of honest fame and condition, can be received into the said guild.

[10.] If any alderman shall happen to dye, or shall be removed from his office on [for] any just and reasonable cause, the community of the said town shall immediately choose another into the said office, which alderman so elected, in the presence of the said community, shall promise, that he will faithfully perform and observe all and singular those things which belong to his office.

[11.] When any one shall be received into the said guild, he shall promise in the hands of the said alderman on his faith, that he will be obedient unto the said alderman and his officers of the guild for the time being, in all lawful and honest things touching their office, and that he will faithfully observe, as far as he is able, all the lawful ordinances which, for the good rule and government of the said guild, and honourable support of the said chaplains, and the alms and good works of the said guild, are already made, or shall be made hereafter.

industrious person, though of servile birth, or origin, be thus disdainfully precluded from partaking of the benefit of their institution, while he could advance the admission, or entrance money?]

[12.] It was ordained on Wednesday in the week of Pentecost in the 7. of Edward \* that the bretheren should keep a general Morwespech † three times a year; to wit, on Friday in Whitsun week, on Friday after the exaltation of the Holy Cross, and on Friday on the first week of Lent.

[13.] Likewise it was ordained, by common consent, that the alderman and his brethren should take care that a solemn mass should be celebrated for the soul of John de Grey, formerly bishop of Norwich, who first obtained the liberty of the said guild; viz. on the feast of the holy Trinity, where every one of the brethren was to make an offering of an halfpenny, and if any one made default, he was to give one sextary of wine to the alms of the said house and gild.

[14.] And on Friday on the week of Pentecost in the 44. Edward III. [1370] Thomas de Bockisham then alderman of, &c. it was agreed unanimously that all the brethren who were well in town should meet at Vespers at St. Margaret's church, and should hear together Vespers and Placebo for the soul of the aforesaid king John and John [de] Grey bishop of Norwich, and on the day following, on the feast of the holy Trinity, they should all be there present, and hear the mass said of the holy Trinity, and, immediately after that, the mass for the dead, by note, for the souls aforesaid.

[15.] On Friday on the week of Pentecost, in the 23

\* Same date. Quere if not Edward, 1. 1279.

† We have not these meetings any where explained: nor do we well know in what they were distinguished from those called generals.



Edward 3. it was provided by common assent, for ever, that no brother ought to buy or sell any millstones, or marble stones, brought to Lynn to be sold, as long as the scabini of this house would buy them for the profit of the guild and pay for them to the full, and if any one brother should act contrary hereto, he should for ever be deprived of the society.

[16.] On Friday the week of Pentecost the 24. Edward 3. it was provided and agreed that every one of the skivins shall faithfully and separately give in his account before the alderman and his brethren to shew to them how many millstones he has bought or sold, to whom he has sold, and for what price; and what size every millstone was which he either bought or sold: and all the ready money (silver) he has he shall bring with him; and if he does not, as is here provided, he shall give six pound of silver to the use and profit of the said house, or be discharged the society.

[17.] If any brother shall be elected to the office of a skivin and he shall refuse it, he shall pay 40s to the good of the house, or be expelled.

[18.] On Friday in Pentecost week, 16. Edward III. it was provided and ordained unanimously by the alderman and the fraternity that the skivins for the time being may at any time of the year distrain and bring their distresses for rents and farms belonging to the guild, according to the customs, &c. of the Burgh of Lynn,

and that for the time to come the skivins should be responsible for the full payments of the said rents and firmis till the time of their accounting shall come, and that the skivins for the time being, whether they are elected this present year or have been elected the foregoing year shall every year at the feast of St. John Baptist account with their tenants, and the said tenants shall hire again of the said skivins the houses which they shall hold beyond the term of the said St. John as the said skivins shall see to be most for the profit of the said guild: and whatever accident shall happen, either by the occupation of the said houses, the king's ministers, or any other persons whatever, or by any other accident whatever, the said tenants of the farms aforesaid shall answer for the whole time to the said skivins, in full, without any deductions at the terms aforesaid. \*

\* The remainder of the above article, being rather long, and what would take up too much room in the text, but too curious, perhaps, to be omitted, is thrown into this note, and is as follows.—“And that the said skivins are to take keyage of merchandizes lying on the key in manner and form following. viz. For every pipe (dolium) of wine lying on the kay beyond one day 1*d.* and no more for a week, and so for every week.—*Also*, for every pipe of Wad. \* lying on the kay beyond a day 1*d.* and no more for a week, and so for every week.—*Also*, for every fardwell called gybe † of the weight of one pipe or above lying on the kay beyond a day 1*d.* and no more for a week, and so for every week.—And in the same manner for any other goods or ware of the weight of one pipe of wine or more lying, &c.—Of every ship bringing in goods, or carrying out, 4*d.* or less, according to the discretion of the skivins.—*Also* for three stones, called Slipstones, lying on the kay beyond a day, a farthing, and not more for a week, and so for every week.—*Also*, for two pieces of Lead ‡ lying on the kay above one day a farthing, and not more for a week, and so for every week.—*Also*, for sand, chalk, clay, stone, tiles, and other things, of the weight of one load, lying on the kay above a day, an halfpenny, &c.—*Also*, for the load of one boat of sand, chalk, &c. lying, &c. a farthing.—*Also*, for any wares or goods not herein named, according to the custom the

[19.] On Friday on the week of Pentecost in the 27. of Edward III. Jeffrey Drew then alderman, it is provided that if any brother was found guilty and convicted of any notorious and scandalous falshood to the loss or disgrace of the guild, he should be deprived, and never be reconciled, but looked upon as a convict and perjured person.

[20.] On Friday next after the feast of the exaltation of the holy Cross, in the 31. of Edward 3. Jeffrey Drew then alderman, it was unanimously agreed by the alderman and his brethren, that as by the grant of the king in his charter the Burgh of Lynn Epi. had this Liberty, that the burgesses of the same in all fairs through the kingdom of England were free and enjoyed that freedom; when therefore any one of the said burgesses or brethren should go to the fair at Stirbridge, or where any such like fair is held, and has taken his place by the consent of any of the bailiffs of those places, and marked it out by stakes or pins, by wood or stone, if any other burghess of Lynn, or brother, either by pre-

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skivins have used.—*Also*, for every millstone, lying above a day, an halfpenny, &c.—*Also*, for every last of Quernstones. || lying on the kay above a day, one penny &c.—*Also*, for every last of pitch and brimstone lying one day, 1*d.* and so for every day.—*Also*, for every hawser tyed to the kay, one penny.—*Also*, The sd. [qu. said] day it is ordered that no bad persons, nor any spiritual § person, should work upon the kay.

\* Quere. † A grant, pack, or bale of goods? gybe, from Gibbus.

† Duob. peciis plumbi, probably what are now called piggs.

|| De Quernstonis, small grinding stones for mustard, malt &c. as I take it: Quern for corn by corruption.

§ Spiritual: it is likely that some of the monks or fryars used to do so.

[These notes are Parkin's.]



sents or favour should deprive of or expel the aforesaid burgess, or brother, from his place so taken as aforesaid, he is to be looked upon and esteemed as a transgressor of the aforesaid Liberty, and to be fined 40s. so that the person so deprived and expelled may have 20s. of it; and if the transgressor shall happen to be a brother of the said gild, he shall be obliged by the alderman to pay 20s. for the benefit of the said guild; and if the transgressor shall be a burgess, and not a brother of the guild, he shall be obliged to pay 20s. by the mayor of the town, for the benefit of the commonalty of the said town.

[21.] It is provided that none of our brethren shall come into the guild before the alderman and his brethren capped, or hooded, or barefooted, or in any other rude or rustick manner, and if he does he shall pay 4*d.* for alms. \*

[22.] 16. Richard 2. 1393. Licence was granted that John de Brunham and Thomas de Couteshale, of Lynn, might give to Henry de Betely, alderman, the rents and profits of five messuages, one Kay, 11*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* rent, and the profit of one passage boat beyond the port of Lynn Epi. with the appurtenances in Lynn. P. C, P. &c. N. 54. pt. 2." †

\* This article may be considered as a rule for preserving good manners at the guild. The prohibition of coming there *barefooted*, is a plain indication, that it was common then, even for those of the better sort, to go about ordinarily without shoes and stockings. The case is very different now: and yet it may be questioned, if we live happier than they did. The former article contains directions for the conduct of the brethren and burgesses at Stirbich and other such fairs.

† The remainder of the account of this guild, in the said MS. Volume, consists of brief notices, or rather the names of its aldermen at different periods: [by *Parkin*.] Of which the following is the substance.—

It is very evident from the above extracts that the fraternity of the *holy Trinity* stood very high among the Lynn Gilds; and there is reason to believe that it far surpassed any of the rest in power and opulence: of which the number of its *chaplains* and the extent of its *possessions* may be considered as very good and competent proofs. Of those possessions we can form but a very imperfect idea from what has been above said upon that subject. A much more correct and adequate idea may be obtained from the charter of Edward VI. after the dissolution of the gilds, in which the said possessions are by him transferred or granted to the mayor and burgesses.—This Charter bears date 21. May 1548, the 2nd year of that reign. The substance of it, as it relates to this gild, and serves to elucidate the present subject, is as follows—

“Edward VI. by the grace of God, &c:—Whereas certain lands and tenements, and other hereditaments

Richard Lambert occurs Alderm. 1272. 56. Henry 3.

Robert de London alderm. occurs 15. Edward I. and 18. Edward I. Wm de Lyndesey was his deputy. Peter de Thrundeyn chos. ald. on Friday after the assumpt. of the Virg. M. 18. Ed. 1. and occurs also in the 34. of the said king.

Simon Fitz Simon occ. ald. 15. § Ed. 2. John de Morton then Mayor 3rd. time.

Robt. de Derby, Q. if not ald. 3. Ed. 3. seems to occ.

Jeff. Drew ald. occ. 27. and 31. Ed. 3.

Tho. Bottesham occ. ald. 44. Ed. 3. and in 1379.

Wm. Franceys ald. 14. Ed. 3.

Hen. Betely occ. ald. tem. Rich.2.

Roger Galyon occ. Mayor and Ald. 13. Hen. 4. 25 July.

John Brunham occ. ald. 7. Hen. 4. 5. and in 3.

Tho. Hunt occ. ald. 20 June I Hen. 6.

Hen. Thoresby occ. ald. 25. Hen. 6. and 21 Hen. 6.

Walter Cony ald. 1464. above 14 years, dy'd 29 Sept. 1479.

lying in our burgh of Lynn Regis, South Lynn, Hardwick, Gaywood, Sechchithe, Middleton, Westwinch, Snetsham, Shernborn, Eaton, Ingoldesthorpe, in the county of Norfolk, and certain lands and tenements lying in Brandon Ferry in Suffolk, which amount to the yearly value of 32*l.* 12*s.* 11*d.* besides all reprises, were formerly given and granted to the alderman, custodes, or scabins, and the brethren of the Merchants' guild of the Holy Trinity, in Lynn Regis aforesaid, and their successors.—and all and singular whereof come to us, and are in our keeping, by virtue of an act of parliament made at Westminster 4. Nov. in the 1st year of our reign; and whereas the rents and profits of the same were formerly laid out in defending the breaches of the sea, repairing of banks, walls, fleets, and water courses, in Lynn aforesaid, without which the said village could not be kept and preserved against the violence of the sea. We therefore considering and having regard to the good state and defence of the said village, out of our good will, and by the advice, &c. . . . have given and granted to the Mayor and Burgesses of Lynn aforesaid, out of the aforesaid lands and tenements, &c. two messuages, one water-mill, 241 acres and 2 roods of arable land, 6 acres and 1 rood of meadow inclosed, and 46 acres of pasture inclosed, lying and being in the village and fields of Snetsham, Ingoldesthorpe, Eaton, and Shernborn, now or late in the tenure of William Overend; one messuage called the Chequer with 2 acres of land thereto belonging, and another messuage called Pepers, with 2 acres thereunto adjoining; 120 acres of arable land, 3 acres of pasture, and the liberty of a fold



for 340 sheep, and the rent of 24*d.* per annum, in Brandon Ferry aforesaid, in the tenure of John Atmere. Also one tenement now or late in the tenure of William Bolton, two tenements in the tenure of John Salter, one tenement now or lately in the tenure of Thomas Wyer; one tenement now or lately in the tenure of Thomas Wild, one tenement now or lately in the tenure of John Standfast, one tenement, &c. in the tenure of John Shoemaker, one tenement in the tenure of Jas. Mayner, one pasture in the tenure of John Waters, one messuage, or inn, called the White Hart, &c. in the tenure of Thomas Mese, one tenement in the tenure of Edward Baker, one tenement in the tenure of Richard Norman, one tenement in the tenure of Richard Newgate, one tenement in the tenure of Beatrice Isloppe, one tenement in the tenure of Joan Wilson, diverse tenements in the tenure of George Felton, two tenements in the tenure of James . . . . one tenement in the tenure of Robert Bleisby, one tenement in the tenure of Edw. Newton, one tenement in the tenure of Edw. Irishman, one tenement in the tenure of the Mayor and Burgesses, two tenements in the tenure of Wm. Manderson, one tenement in the tenure of . . . . Jareth, one tenement in the tenure of Alan Newton, one tenement in the tenure of . . . . Coke, one tenement in the tenure of John Hart, one tenement in the tenure of Nich. Feries, one tenement in the tenure of Francis Balden, one tenement in the tenure of John Cragge, one garden in the tenure of John Wrenche, one tenement in the tenure of Cornelius Adrianson, one messuage, called Le Guild Hall, in the tenure the of Mayor and Bur-

gesses, one tenement in the tenure of . . . Wilson; seven houses, called warehouses, and six chambers over them on the north side of the port called Common Stath; nine houses, called warehouses, with chambers over them, on the south side of the Common Stath; one tenement in the tenure of Thomas Courte, one tenement in the tenure of Robt. Smith, one tenement in the tenure of Cuthbert Atkinson, one tenement in the tenure of Rt. Rowe, two tenements in the tenure of Wm. Clayborne, one Curtilage in the tenure of John Wilson, one Curtilage in the tenure of Tho. Lockwood, one Curtilage in the tenure of Rt. Parke, one Curtilage in the tenure of Sim. Newell, one tenement in the tenure of John Curson, one tenement in the tenure of John Eldred, one tenement in the tenure of John Sharpe, one tenement in the tenure of Thomas Furnes, one tenement in the tenure of Tho. Archers, one tenement in the tenure of Andrew Skite, one in the tenure of Tho. Maltward, one in the tenure of Reginald Taylor, one in the tenure of Robt. Weyman, one capital messuage, late Brasum, now or lately in the tenure of the guild of the holy Trinity, one Messuage, called New-hall, in the tenure of the mayor and burgesses, one garden in the tenure of Thomas Miller, and one passage over the port of Lynn, late in the tenure of Oliver Bralkett; all and every part of which are and lie in the Village of Lynn aforesaid. And also 15 acres of land in Islington, in the tenure of Robert Balding, 15 acres of land in Sechehithe in the tenure of John Barvell, 3 acres of land in Westwinch, in the tenure of Malachy Cogley, 3 acres of land in Seche, in the tenure of Thomas Baker, one

pasture in Gaywood, in the tenure of Barnard Water, and one messuage, 46 acres of land, an 100 acres of pasture, 45 acres of meadow and 50 acres of marsh with the appurtenances lying in South Lynn in the tenure of Henry Bleisby. Also certain yearly rents issuing out of the tenements called Baretts, and out of the tenements late Richard Humphreys, and out of the tenements of William Pipers, and out of the tenements late Wilsons, and out of the tenements of Thomas Dawson, and out of the tenements late John Alexander, and out of the tenements of John Parmyter, and out of the tenements late Robert Amflet, lately belonging to the mayor and burgessess, and out of a curtilage late John Baxter's and William Hall, and out of the tenement of Robert Gervys, and out of the tenements belonging to the Warden of the chapel of St James in Lynn, and out of a Pasture called Paradise in Lynn, and out of the tenements late John Powers, and out of the tenements of Henry Duplack, called the White Horse, in Lynn, which were lately parcell of the lands, possessions and revenues belonging to the Merchants' Guild of the Holy Trinity in Lynn aforesaid; together with all the wood, timber, trees, underwood, &c. liberties of foldage, and all other lands, tenements, &c. lying in Lynn Regis, Snetsham, Ingoldesthorpe, Eaton, Sherborne, South Lynn, Hardwick, Gaywood, Sechehythe, Middleton, Seche, \* and Westwinch in Norfolk, and Brandon Ferry in Suffolk, belonging to the guild of the Holy Trinity, to be held of the king and his heirs, paying 13*l*. 16*s*. yearly, at the feast of St Michael and the annun-

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\* *Seche* is here distinguished from *Sechehythe*.



ciation, by equal portions, at the court augmentations. And we further grant to the said mayor and burgesses all the stock of millstones, amounting to the value of 40*l*. late parcell of the goods and chattels of the Guild of the Holy Trinity. And we further grant to the said mayor and burgesses and their successors, that they may purchase and acquire to themselves and successors lands and tenements to the value of 100*l*. per annum, or any other sum than 100*l*. per annum, without any fine to us or to our use, and that these Letters patents should be granted them without any fee to be paid or given. Dated at Wansted, 21. May A.<sup>o</sup> 2.<sup>o</sup> \* \*

This document makes it very clear, that our Trinity Gild had acquired large possessions: nor is it to be concluded that the above items, or specifications, constituted the whole of them; their mercantile property and revenue, at least, are still to be added, which cannot be supposed inconsiderable; and there might be lands and tenements beside, that belonged to them, which the king might not choose to include in the above grant. However that was, it may be reasonably and safely presumed that the possessions of this fraternity were much larger than those of any of the rest, and that its weight and influence in the town were also very considerable, not only exceeding those of any of the others, but even, perhaps, of the corporation itself.— Its 13 chaplains may be considered as a proof of its great opulence, as well as of its assuming a very high religious character, which was looked upon, it seems, in those times, as essential to

\* Mr. Day's MS. volume, p. 59, &c.

the reputation and prosperity of all social institutions, those of a civil and commercial, as well as of an ecclesiastical nature. The case is not exactly so in the present day. Between our present protestant corporation, with *only two* chaplains, and this same gild with *thirteen*, one may presume there must be what may be called a pretty strong and striking contrast. We would fain hope, however, that the advantage to the community lies very, materially on the protestant side — Be that as it may, very different from what it is at present must have been the state of things at the period of which we are now treating, when the members of a fraternity which comprehended the first families in the town, were prohibited, as has been already remarked, to appear before the alderman, or at the gild meetings, *barefooted*; which clearly indicates that it was then customary, for even the principal families, to go about, ordinarily, *without shoes and stockings*. It was the case, no doubt, with those of both sexes—shoes and stockings constituting then only a part of the sunday and holyday dress, or the *full dress*, of even the people of the first fashion in the place, such as the Bagges, the Everards, and the Hoggs of those days: Nor are we warranted to conclude, that they were, therefore, less respectable or less happy than their successors of the present generation. It was the fashion in those times, and it could affect neither their respectability nor their happiness.

SECTION VI. *Account of the remaining Gilds, and particularly those of St. Francis and St. William.*

Next, in the Catalogue, after the gild of the Trinity, are those of St. Andrew, Holy Rood, St. Lovis, St. Austin, St. Barbara, St. Antony, and St. Stephen; of none of which have we been able to obtain any further information.—They were, probably, fraternities of the lower sort; and having no large or permanent possessions attached to them, such necessary records as might exist among them would not be likely to remain to any distant period. Whatever they were, they seem to have long ago perished; and so, in all likelihood, had also their very names, but for the laudable care and industry of the unknown compiler of Mr. King's valuable MS. Volume, who, finding them in some old record which fell in his way, thought proper to transcribe and insert them among his curious collections and memoranda.

Of the next gild, the 28th, in the catalogue, that of *St. Francis*, the said MS. volume contains a very particular, and what may also be called a very curious account. It has preserved a copy, as it seems, of the incorporating instrument, original agreement, or foundation deed of this gild. This document is certainly uncouth enough, both as to style and orthography: but as it may on that account be no less valuable or interesting, it shall be here inserted, for the entertainment and information of the curious and intelligent reader.—We find that the Gild to which it relates was founded by a priest, or friar, of the name of *John Wells*, who is called *Sir John Wells*, it being customary in those days to



prefix the term, or title of *Sir*, mostly, if not always, to the name of an ecclesiastic. He seems to have been also its alderman in 1467, if he was not so from the time of its foundation, 13 years earlier.—The said Deed, or Instrument, reads as follows.

“Be yt knowen to all chrysten evydently be yis present wryghthyng, yat in ye yeer of our Lord M, CCCC, LIIII. a certen compan [company] of ye towne of Lenn begonne a gilde in the honour and reverence of all myghty God, & of his blessyd confessor seynt Iffranseis, for to be holde and kept perpetually in the convent of the fryers mynors of Lynn before seyde. Wherefore the brethryn be comown assent of hem all ordeynd hir statutys [statutys] wretyn in a forme to be pronownsyd & redde two tymys in ye yeer among all ye brethryn of ye gilde, & if it be not so yat be ye negligens of ye aldyrman yeis statutys be not redde in all ye yeer ye aldyrman shall pay to ye mendyn g of ye company *1*lb.** wax. Be yt ordeynd yt every yeer shall be schosyn an aldyrman in yis foorme, first & foremost ye aldyrman shll chose iiij men, and ye iiij men shll calle to hem other iiij men, and ye viii sall chose an aldyrman, to whose precepts & commandments ye hole fraternyte sall abeygn, and he hym yei sall be governd in all thynggs yat be loful & proffytabyll to ye gylde, & also yei chose iiij skeyents in whos handys sall be ye catel of ye gylde, & yerof to geeve a tress a counth at dew tyme asynd by ye aldyrman & yt be ye oths made beforne all ye brethryn, of ye which iiij ij sall be frers of ye same place: Also yei shall chose a clarke & a done to

whose offyce yt loughyth to somawne and warne ye brethryn to cwn togedyr whan ye aldyrmansend for yem for to have her mornspicheoz or any other thyng ye which sulld be to ye honour & worshyp of ye gylde in peyne of a *lb.* of wax, & when ye fforseyd viii men have gevyn ye verdyt of her electyon and ye aldyrman which is chosyn at ye tyme refuse to execute ye office he shall paye to ye eneres of ye gylde *iiij s. iiij d.* & on the same wysse every skeventh *2 s.* & ye clarke *12 d.* & ye dean *12 d.* It is ordeynd ye clerke for his labour in ye yeer sall have *10 d.* and ye dene *12 d.*

“Also yt [is] ordeynd yt every yere ye new offierys, yt is to say, ye alderman skyventys clarke and dene, sulld make an othe or a promesse to ye olde aldyrman aforne all ye brethryn at yt time present to make a promise yat yei sall honestly governe ye fraternyte in her yer folowyng up her power with all her myght & her understandyng & manfully ye aldyrman sall defendyn all maner of hevynes & prejudicys fallyng to ye gylde.

“Also yts ordeynd yt ye generall day sall be holden honestly on ye Sondag after ye feast of sent Francesse in ye monyth of October, les yan sent Francesse day fall on Sondag, yan sall yt be holden ye same day, lesse yan any reasonabyl cawes why yt may be holdyn yan, & yan yt sall befall to ye aldyrman to sett a day as hym thynkkyth behovely to besett on in the honowr & reverens of yat blyssyd confiessour yat he may be good mediator betwix God & us, \* for ye which solempnite non of yo brethryn sull absent yem in peyne of a *lb.* wax, but he

\* How happy it was for them to have betwixt them and God such a powerful mediator as *saint Francis!*

have a resonabyll excusacyon: also yt ys ordeynd yt every yer upon ye day beforne ye generall sall be seyde a placebo for all our gyld brethyrn & systers, & on ye next day followyng a messe of requiem be noote at ye awter of Sent Frawnces for ye sowlys of all ye brethyrn & sisters yat be passyd outh of yis ward, at ye which messe every one sall offer an *ob.* \*

“Also yt ys ordende yat yis gyld sall have iij or iiij morspytchys ye yer, ye fyrst to be holdyn on ye general day, ye othyr morspytchys to be holdyn most behovely at dyverse tymes in ye yer to ye most proffitt of ye gyld be ye avyse & assent of ye aldyrman & his officerys conveniently accordyng.

“Also yt ys ordeynd yt every brodyr shall kepe pes love & charyte with othyr in as myche as he can or may; harm nor hevynes wyllfully he sall not do but what with worde strenkyth & mygth as weel with owthyn ye towne as with inne, he sall socowr & keep hym yt need. §

“Also yt ys ordeynd yt yf any dyscorde or heavynesse ffall betwix ye brethyrn, thorow ye informatyon of any othyr wickyde man, yat neydyr of hem sall vexen nor sewyn othyr in temporal cowlthe nor spyrytual in to ye tyme yt ye aldyrman and brethyrn competently & wysly make thereof a ffynial ende in ye payne of 40*d.* so yat ye cawce be swyche yt lawfully it may be determynd betwix ye brethyrn.

“Also yt ys ordeynd yat yf any of ye brethyrn or systers be somownd of ye dene in lefull † & lawful tyme &

\* i. e. a halfpenny.      § All this is very good.

† The meaning of that word seems difficult to make out.



will not obeyn nor aperyn in honest place as wyr asynyd be ye alderman & ye skeventys at yer morspsychys or for othyr thyngs whych sulld profyth to ye gylde, or yer cum not at ye warnyng of ye dene, yei sall pay *l**lb***. wax, but yf he have a reasonaby l excusacyon ye whych excuse sall be examynd wysly a mong ye brethyrn whe-dyr yt be leful or nowth, & yf ye dene faile in yer so-mewnys of any brodyr or systyr yat yan ben not warnyd thorowhys defawthe ye dene sall pay for every brodyr & sistyr not warnd thorow hys defawte *l**d***.

“Also yt ys ordend yt yf any of ye brethyrn or systyrs dey yt all ye breyeryn [bretheryn] sull cum to ye place of ye dede beryng ye body to chyrche & yer to offyr for ye sowl & for to have messe of requiem & sythe to be tendannce in yat holy place tyl ye body be beryde & browth to erde, lesse yay have leve of the aldyrman for to go hoome, to ye which statute ye ffryerys ben exempte save a cowpul or too [two] & ye dene for his labour & lyghtys sall have of ye dede *iiij**d***.

“Also what brodyr or systyr sall be receyvyd into yis gylde he sall paye fyrste hys ffecs yt ys *vd*. to ye wax *l**d***. to ye aldyman *ij**d***. to ye clerke *l**d***. to ye dene *l**d***. & moreover to ye ences of ye gylde aft yt he sall pay *xi**d***.

Wher yt was ordeynd syne be ye eleccyon of viii men so yt yt sulld be consent of ye aldyrman and ye gylde breyeryn, every brodyr & systyr yt sall be reseynes all pay *iis*. & thereto they sall make a promesse upon yer feyth to be trew brodyr & systyr & to kepyn ye cowncellys of ye gylde & not to bewray yem & to kepe ye statutys of

ye gylde & yt ye clerke geff hem her charge fforth-  
wyth on ye sam day whych yf any go undyschargyd  
thorow ye negligens of ye clerke he sall for yche of yem  
1lb. wax,—Also ye aldyrman sall have to hys costys  
on ye general day brede & ale & of sylvyr xid.”

[To the above in the said MS. volume are subjoined  
the following particulars.]

“MEMORANDUM. Sr John Wells has gyffen  
to this ffraternite a Maser with a prynte of seynt John’s  
hede in ye bothome, with a cover to ye same, wryten  
with, soft words swageth ye suffyr and have thi desyre,  
which maser shall remayne with the Wardeyn for the  
time beyng & alway to be present at every mornspech  
& general †—Also a towelle with a dubbyl w of dyapyr  
& a dozen sponys.

“N. B. The above Sr John Wells was ffounder of  
this gild.”

“*Memorandum.* There be xii sponys sylvyr gevyn  
be Willm. Lyster ye which weyyth xiii vn. [oz] a  
quartr. less.

“Item, A maser with the bond & a prente of sylvyr  
gilte yt weyyth xiii vn: s. d.

*The Charge of a General Day.*—In brede iii- iiij.  
In Ale iij dosey iiij Galons - - - v.  
In xii Gees [3d.  $\frac{3}{4}$  apiece] - - - iiij. ix  
In Moton [*Mutton*; but we know not how much] iiij ij.  
In Conynys [*Rabbits*; we know not how many] ij iiij

## 3 N

† This shews that the *mornspechs* and *generals* were different sorts of  
meetings, but it seems not very clear wherein they were so—*Quere*,  
if the former were not the religious, and the latter the convivial meetings

In Onyonys [ <i>Onions.</i> ]	- - - -	d. ob*
In Mylk - - - -	- - - -	iiij.
In Colys iiij b. [ <i>cabbages</i> probably.]	-	vi.
In Garlek [ <i>Garlick</i> ]	- - - -	ob*
In ye Cok [ <i>quere, Cooking</i> ]	- - - -	xii.
For ye tornors [ <i>quere, turnspits</i> ]	- -	ij.
For ye lyth be forn seynt Ffrawseys	-	xii.
For Swyllers - - - -	- - - -	i.
For half an hondryd woode of belet	-	vi.
For ye holdyrs of ye torchys	- - - -	ij.
For Rich. Wylgele	- - - -	i.
For sponys - - - -	- - - -	ij.

Sum. xxiis. viid.

“*Memr.* The price of 3 sheep 8s. & 3 calves 8s. 10d. †

“At a generall day holden at ye ffryers mynors, als.  
Grey ffryers, on St. Lucas day, in ye yere of our Lord

\* Ob. seems to be here a contraction of *obolus*, and signifies a *half-penny*.

† How very different from the present was that time when *three fat sheep* sold for *eight shillings*, and *three fatted calves* for only *eight shillings and ten pence*! The difference in a great measure may consist in the comparative value of money, or of the precious metals. They were then, perhaps, above 20 times more valuable, and less plentiful, than now. We are told that the Jewish Solomon made silver to be in Jerusalem as stone, and that it was nothing accounted of in his days: our own Solomon seems to be in the way to bring things to the same pass. But this is no sure indication of national prosperity—Solomon’s subjects, for all the vast influx of wealth, were grievously oppressed and unhappy, of which his unwise successor felt the sad and fatal effects.—The dissolution of monasteries, expulsion of the monks, and introduction of protestantism were long bewailed by many of our countrymen, as very serious evils, and the causes of the dearness of provisions, &c. Their sentiments and feelings they would often express in verse as well as prose: whence one of our old popular songs had in it these remarkable expressions—

“I remember the time, before the monks went hence,  
That a bushel of wheat sold for fourteen pence,  
And forty eggs a penny——



God M VC XII [1512] it was ordaynd yt ye morespech shal be kept on Sonday after St. ffraunces, & ye ffryers of ye order of St. ffraunces to have *vd.* for ever dede broder & systyr yt ys dede this yer followyng.

“Ordeynd yt John Judd shall finde contenuelly ye wax lyght before St. ffraunces, & to have for his wax & labour iis. vii*id.* & all overplus money to go towards repairing the north yle of ye Grey ffryers chirch.

“The good wills of those yt have gyven toward ye said Grey ffryers chirch as follows—

	s.	d.
Ffryer Thomas Peke warden	iii.	iiij.
Ffryer Water Martyn Lycster		xx.
Willm. Gerves thelder	iii.	iiij.
John Dowghty smyth	iii.	iiij.
Willm. Barker painter iiij treys lyme		
John Judd — iiij treys lyme		
Willm. Hall tailor		xx.
Willm. Wiggon iiij ml. [3000] lath nayles		
Willm. Hall draper iii bunches lath		
Robt. Smyth, a smyth ii ml. [2000] lath nayles		

“1524 Ordeynd yt ther shall be kept every sonday next before All Seynts yearly a solemn masse with dirge for ye sowles ye byfore tyme departyd & ye dene to warne every broder to offer for ye dede upon *ijd.* loss to St. Ffraunces.

### 3 N 2

We are also told that about the time when those changes took place, beef sold at a *half penny* a pound, and mutton at *three farthings*, and that butchers then sold *penny pieces* of beef to the poor, which weighed 2*lb.* & half, and often 3*lb.* and moreover, that 14 such pieces were sold for a shilling.—When the price advanced soon after, it is no wonder that many would impute it to the late religious changes, or previous ecclesiastical revolution.

“The monastery of ye ffryars minorites als. white ffryars [it should be *alias Greyfriars*] of the order of st. Ffraunces, in which was ye warden & 9 ffryars.

“1508. Ffrater Rich. Flete, Prior of ye ffryars Augustins.

Ffrater John Wells, Prior of ye ffryars Carmelites.

Ffrater John Lobby, Prior of ye ffryars Preachers.

Ffrater Thomas Peke Gaurdian [Warden] of ye ffryars minos.

It does not appear that the above Gild had a separate hall, like some of the others, but met, as we have seen, in the abbey, or monastery, of the Grey friars. It seems a very remarkable fraternity, being a mixture of friars, or ecclesiastics, and laics. Its very founder, and, seemingly, its first alderman, and perhaps all its succeeding aldermen, were of the monkish order, and therefore it may be supposed that that description of members bore in it the principal sway, and had the chief management in the direction of its affairs. However that was, it might be in its time a very useful institution, and productive of many valuable and important benefits to its respective constituents. Like the other gilds it appeared particularly attentive to what was then deemed sound doctrine in regard to morality and religion; and, from the character of its leading members, it may be supposed to have exceeded the others, rather than fallen short of them, in the strictness of its attention to those matters, as well as in the rigidness, or severity of its general discipline.

The above extract, with all its uncouthness of style

and orthography, will yet, it is presumed and hoped, add to the value of this work, at least, in the estimation of its most curious and enlightened readers, who will be able to draw from it many useful inferences, which are here necessarily omitted, in order to avoid being too tiresome to others whom the author would wish to gratify, and who probably constitute by far, the most numerous part of the encouragers of this undertaking.—Dry and insipid, as many, perhaps, will deem these old documents relating to our gilds; they seem nevertheless to cast a greater light on the state of society in this town, during the period now under consideration, than any other materials that have fallen in the way of the present writer, or whose existence lie within the compass of his knowledge.

What now remains, before we dismiss this tedious subject, is to say a few words respecting the three remaining gilds mentioned in the catalogue. The next, or 29th. in that list, is *the gild of the Shoemakers*, which consisted, probably, of persons of that occupation, or the brethren of the *gentle craft*, as it has been sometimes called. They might be pretty numerous then at Lynn; and yet it would seem rather odd if they were so, when most of the inhabitants, those of the better sort as well as others, seem to have been pretty much in the habit of going about *barefooted*; unless it might be supposed that shoes were then made here for exportation, as is now the case in many places, where a great many more hands are employed, of course, than is necessary for furnishing the population of those places



with that article. This point, however, must be left undetermined: all we know is, that, among the numerous Lynn Gilds, one was called the *gild of the Shoemakers*, who, whether very numerous or otherwise, seem to have been then a thoughtful, provident, and brotherly-set of people.

The 30th. Gild was called the *Red Gild*. The reason for giving it that name we are utterly unable to discover, or even to conjecture. Nor do we know whether it was rich or poor—consisted of many, or of but few members—managed its affairs wisely or unwisely:—We just learn, that it was called *the red gild*; and there our knowledge of it begins and ends.—Some may, perhaps, be apt to suspect, that both this and the preceding gild were no better than they ought to be, in point of piety, or what in those days was so denominated, as they did not assume the name of any saint, or angel, or sacred object, like the other gilds, but went each of them, by a plain, simple name, that had nothing in it sanctimonious, venerable, or prepossessing. As the times went, it cannot be thought that these two gilds could be in favour with the friars and the other orders of religious functionaries: nor are we sure that they were at all solicitous about it, or thought proper to employ a single chaplain in their service. They might, however, not be the worse for that, if they were duly attentive to those moral obligations which they owed to one another, and to the rest of their fellow-citizens.

The 31st. Gild, and the last in the catalogue, had also, like most of the others, a saint in its belly; and that

saint was the poor lad whom the Jews were said to have crucified at Norwich in the 12th century, (as was before noted, at page 352,) and whom the pope sometime after canonized, under the name of *saint William*.\* His patronage, no doubt, was as effectual a guard to those good folks who chose to put themselves under his protection as that of any other dead saint would have been. This gild, as we are told, traded to North Bern, which plainly implies, that it was another mercantile fraternity, or gild of merchants. By *North Bern* is probably meant North Bergen, or Bergen in Norway, with which country Lynn appears to have carried on a considerable trade from a very remote period, The connection between this town and those parts was then so great that Lynn merchants usually resided there: and there is to be seen in Mr. Day's MS. volume, p. 55, the copy of a latin letter, of the date of 1305, from Bartholomew, the king of Norway's chancellor, to the mayor of Lynn, in behalf of Thurkill and other merchants resident there. It was also customary for our merchants to have a consul of their own, or alderman, as they called him, appointed for Norway: for which purpose or appointment it was necessary, it seems, to obtain a royal warrant. There is in Mackerell the copy of such a warrant from Henry V. which runs thus—"HENRY, by the grace of God, king of England and of France, and lord of Ireland; to our trusty and well beloved the mayor, aldermen, and other merchants inhabiting within our town

\* Our Gilds were somewhat like the navies of our good allies the Portuguese and Spaniards, where almost every ship bears the name of some saint or other: but it does not seem that they are at all the better for that.

of Lynn, shewed unto us, that by the old privilege among you, used in exercising the sale of your merchandizes in the lands and countries of Denmark and Norway, ye have an ancient custom to have an alderman chosen by election among you to be ruler and governor of your company in the said countries, and to see good rule and order kept among you there, which we will be content to help and see to be holden for the increasing and augmentation of the common weal and prosperity of you and all other our true subjects; we having the same in our good remembrance, be content and woll, that ye gadre and assemble toguider, and among you chuse such oon to be your said alderman, as ye shall think convenient, good, honest, and sufficient for the premisses; and to use, have, enjoy, and occupy the liberties and franchises in this cause heretofore accustomed. Yeven under our Signet at our Manor of Greenwich, the 18th. day of July, the fifth year of our reign."

As to our Gild of St. William, that seems to have consisted of mercantile adventurers who traded only to Bergen, which was probably at that time the capital of Norway. It was perhaps an opulent gild, but as none of its records are known now to remain, we must here close our account of it, and so dismiss the subject.

\* How many *Gild Halls* there were formerly at Lynn, besides those of *St. George* and the *Trinity*, it is now impossible to say: but we may pretty safely presume that there were several; one of them was probably that place in Purfleet Street which was a dissenting meeting house 40 or 50 years ago, and is now occupied as a school room: but we pretend not to guess to what Gild it belonged.



## CHAP. VI.



Account of the Monasteries and Religious Houses that were formerly at Lynn.

From the fraternities called gilds the transition is pretty short and natural to the monasteries and religious houses. Of these there were here formerly a great many, the account of some of which is so imperfect and confused, that it is difficult to fix their exact number, or point out the places where they all stood. The following were probably the chief of them—1. *A Nunnery*, or Convent of Nuns: the site unknown. 2. *A Priory of Benedictins*; situated in Priory Lane. 3. *A monastery or Convent of the Carmelites, or White Friars*; situated in South Lynn. 4. Another of the *Grey-friars, Friars minors, or Franciscans*; situated in Fuller's Row, now St. James's Street. 5. Another of the *Black Friars, preaching friars, or Dominicans*; situated in Clough Lane, or rather between that and Spimer Lane. 6. Another of *Austin Friars, or Her-*

*mits of the order of St Augustin*; situated in Hogman's Lane, alias Hopman's Way, now St. Austin's Street. 7. Another of *Friars de Penitentia Jesu*; its site now unknown. 8. *A College*; situated near the Town Hall; now inhabited by Mr. Toosey. 9. *St. John's Hospital*; the site not known. 10. *St. Mary Magdalen's Hospital*; its site where the Gaywood Alms-house now stands. 11. *Four Lazar Houses*; sites, it seems, at West Lynn, Cowgate, Hardwick, and Gaywood.—To these may be added divers other religious houses and chapels, such as those of *St. James's*, *our Lady's on the Mount*, *our Lady's on the Bridge*, *St. Anne's*, *St. Catherine's*, &c. the sites of some of which appear not very easy now to mark out. They seem, all of them, to have been laid by at the reformation, when the dissolution of the monasteries and gilds took place: except the *Nunnery* first above-mentioned; which had long before been removed hence to Thetford. Concerning which removal we are informed, that a certain priory of monks at Thetford being, in 1176, reduced to two, the Abbot of Bury persuaded them to resign; upon which he placed in their stead a convent of nuns who had previously resided at Lynn.\* But it is not said how long their residence here had been, or for what reason they were removed hence. Of the other convents, &c. we propose giving a further account, under the several following subdivisions or sections.

\* Beauties of England, vol. xi, 245.

SECTION I. *Account of the House of the Benedictines in Priory lane, with a sketch of that religious order.*

This House, or Priory, was founded by Herbert Lozinga, first bishop of Norwich, in the reign of William Rufus. \* We are told that this house and the church of St. Margaret were both built by bishop Herbert at the request of the men of the town of Lenn; and that he, in order to facilitate the undertaking, granted an indulgence of 40 days pardon to all who should contribute towards it; also that he settled the tithes and ecclesiastical dues of the whole town upon this church and priory, and had the same confirmed by the pope. He is also said to have given or settled upon them all he had or possessed, as far as the church of William the son of Stanquin, † on the other side of Sewaldsfeld, in rents, lands, and men, ‡ except Seman and his land, and the saltwork which the mother of Seman held. He likewise granted the Saturday mercate, and the Fair on St. Margaret's day to this house, or rather to his great house the priory of the Holy Trinity at Norwich, to which this priory of Lynn was a cell. The said bishop also gave them the new mill in Gaywode marsh, with that marsh, the churches of Gaywode and Mintling, the priest at Mintling, the tithes of his demeans at Gaywode, with a villain called Edward, and all his land; also his saltworks in the said town, except two, and

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\* See Parkin 126. † We cannot find what church this was.

‡ Men were then in England conveyed with the land.



that which Leofric, son of Limburgh held, and the mother of Seman : also the church of Sedgford with the tithes, and all that Walter the archdeacon had, as he held it; the church of Thornham, with the tithes and all belonging to it; his land at Fringes, with 70 acres of land in Sedgeford, free and quit of all service, with the land of Owen of Lakesle." § Thus were the donations or endowments specified.

This Lynn Priory being accounted only a cell to the Priory of Norwich, that house appointed a monk of their body to be prior here at Lynn, who was responsible to the priory of Norwich for the rents and profits he received, and seems to have been removable at pleasure. Many other grants were afterwards by succeeding bishops made to this priory, as may be seen at large in Blomefield and Parkin.

This house stood on the north side of Priory Lane, which took its name from it; but it took up a considerable part of the ground between that lane and the church, and seems to have been a pretty extensive building. Its prior, though subordinate to him of Norwich, and removable by him and his monks at their pleasure, was yet a person of no small consequence among the monks of Lynn, as well as in the estimation of the inhabitants. He was, no doubt, looked up to, for many ages, and esteemed among the principal personages of the place; but he is no longer remembered; and in a few years the present heads of the town will be as little thought of

§ Parkin as before.

After the dissolution, the Lynn Priory was partly pulled down, to enlarge the church yard. What was then left was in time removed, and scarcely any remains of it now exist, except what may be discovered in some of the walls of the old dwellings on the north side of the lane. The monks of this house, at one time, according to Parkin, were grown so rich, beyond the design of the founder, as to endanger the bishop's preponderance in the place; which occasioned bishop De Grey, [who then filled the see, to take measures for reducing their power and securing his own, by making an exchange with the priory of Norwich, of lands or possessions belonging to them here, for other lands belonging to his see elsewhere. A copy of the bishop's deed for this purpose has been preserved by Parkin, \* as have been also many particulars relating to this priory, which, though not altogether uninteresting, must be here omitted.

The Benedictine order, to which the monks of this house belonged, is of considerable antiquity. It was instituted, according to Mosheim † A. D. 529, by BENEDICT of *Nursia*, a man of piety and reputation for the age he lived in. From his *rule* of discipline, which is yet extant, we learn that it was not his intention to impose it upon all the monastic societies, but to form an order whose discipline should be milder, their establishment more solid, and their manners more regular, than those of the other monastic bodies; and whose members during the course of a holy and peaceful life, were

\* Parkin, 129. † Eccl. History, 1. 447. Ed. 1774.

to divide their time between prayer, reading, the education of youth, and other pious and learned labours. But in process of time the followers of this celebrated ecclesiastic degenerated sadly from the piety of their founder, and lost sight of the duties of their station and the great end of their establishment.

Having acquired immense riches from the devout liberality of the opulent, they sunk into luxury, intemperance, and sloth, abandoned themselves to all sorts of vices, extended their zeal and attention to worldly affairs, insinuated themselves into the cabinets of princes, took part in political cabals and court factions, made a vast augmentation of superstitious rites and ceremonies in their order, to blind the multitude and supply the place of their expiring virtue; and, among other *meritorious* enterprizes, laboured most ardently to swell the arrogance, by enlarging the power and authority, of the Roman pontif. The good Benedict never dreamt that the great purposes of his institution were to be thus perverted, much less did he give any encouragement or permission to such flagrant abuses. His rule of discipline was neither favourable to luxury nor ambition; and it is still celebrated on account of its excellence, though it has not been observed for many years."

The same writer observes, that this order made a most rapid progress in these western parts, and in a short time arrived at the most flourishing state. "In *Gaul* its interests were promoted by MAURUS; in *Sicily* and *Sardinia* by PLACIDUS; in *Italy*, &c. by GREGORY the GREAT;



and in *England*, by AUGUSTIN and MELLITUS." Its sudden and amazing progress was ascribed by the Benedictins to the wisdom and sanctity of their discipline, and to the miracles which were worked by their founder and his followers. But a more attentive view of things will convince the impartial observer, that the protection of the Roman pontifs, to the advancement of whose grandeur and authority the Benedictins were most servilely devoted, contributed much more to the lustre and influence of their order, than any other circumstance, nay, than all other considerations united together." In the ninth century the credit and power of those of this order became so great and predominant as actually to absorb all the other religious societies, and hold unrivalled the reins of monastic empire. But by that time, and therefore long before their settlement at Lynn, they had departed from their original simplicity and were become a degenerate and corrupt order. Consequently it is not very likely that its establishment here could be of any very substantial or important advantage to our ancestors.

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SECTION II. *Account of the convent of the Curmes, Carmelites, or White Friars, in South Lynn, with a sketch of that religious order.*

This House stood close to the river Lenn or Nar, in the field now called *the friars*. All the remains of it have long dissappeared, except the Gateway or Gatehouse, which is supposed to have been the principal

entrance into the place. It is said to be founded about 1269, by the lord Bardolph of that time; though others say that the founder was Thomas de Feltsham, but that the lord Bardolph, the lord Scales, and Sir John Wigenhale were also considerable benefactors to it. William le Breton was also among its benefactors in the reign of Henry III. having endowed it with lands in South Lynn, Burgh Green, Dillingham and other places, in Norfolk and Cambridgeshire. William lord Randolph, who died in the 9th. of Richard II. was buried here. In the 12th. of the same reign these monks had a patent for the rent of ten quarters of *frumenti*, and ten quarters of barley, to receive them annually of the manor of Stow Bardolph, granted by John lord Bardolph.—April 13th. 1379, Sir Hamon Felton, of Litcham willed his body to be buried in the church of the Carmes, at Lynn. The noble family of Hastings also appear to have been great benefactors to this house.—From all these circumstances it may be very plainly seen, that this convent was a place of considerable note and reputation, and that, probably, for many ages. But nothing could save it from that dissolution which all such places experienced in the memorable reign of Henry VIII.—The site of it was then purchased by John Eyre Esq. who was one of that king's auditors or receivers; and he conveyed it to a priest, from whom the corporation purchased it, who have been in possession of it ever since. How long after that it was suffered to stand does not appear. The Steeple was probably that part of it which stood the longest, except the Gatehouse above-mentioned. The said steeple appears to have stood near a 100 years after the

dissolution: it fell, as we are told, for want of due repair, on the 9th. of April 1631, after having stood upwards of 360 years. Where this lofty steeple and the great church and convent of the Carmelites stood for so many ages, not a stone is now left upon another. A plain field or pasture is all that is now to be seen; just as if such an extensive edifice had never existed or stood there. The case is much the same with the other Lynn monasteries, except that of the Grey Friars, whose steeple still remains, owing to more attention being paid to the keeping of it in repair.

The Carmelites, together with the Franciscans, Dominicans, and Augustinians, constituted the four famous orders of Mendicants: and it is somewhat remarkable that they all established themselves at Lynn, and had the whole town, in a manner, divided among themselves, which seems not to have been unusual with them. \*—

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\* “As the pontiff, (says Mosheim) allowed these four Mendicant orders the liberty of travelling wherever they thought proper, of conversing with persons of all ranks, of instructing the youth and the multitude wherever they went; and, as these monks exhibited, in their outward appearance and manner of life, more striking marks of gravity and holiness than were observable in the other monastic societies, they arose all at once to the very summit of fame, and were regarded with the utmost esteem and veneration throughout all the countries of Europe. The enthusiastic attachment to these sanctimonious beggars went so far, that, as we learn from the most authentic records, several cities were divided, or cantoned out, into four parts, with a view to these four orders; the first part was assigned to the Dominicans; the second to the Franciscans; the third to the Carmelites; and the fourth to the Augustinians. The people were unwilling to receive the sacraments from any other hands than those of the Mendicants, to whose churches they crowded to perform their devotion, while living, and were extremely desirous to deposite there also their remains after death;



Of the present order, that of the Carmes, or Carmelites, the following account will give the reader, it is presumed a sufficiently correct idea. "About the middle of this century (the 12th.) a certain Calabrian, whose name was *Berthold*, set out with a few companions for mount Carmel, and there, upon the very spot where the prophet Elias is said to have disappeared, built an humble cottage with an adjoining chapel, in which he led a life of solitude, austerity, and labour. This little colony subsisted, and the places of those that died were more than filled by new comers; so that it was at length erected into a monastic community by *Albert*, patriarch of Jerusalem. This austere prelate drew up a rule of discipline for the new monks, which was afterwards confirmed by the authority of the Roman pontiffs, who modified and altered it in several respects, and among other corrections mitigated its excessive rigour and severity. Such was the origin of the famous *Order of Carmelites*; or, as they are commonly called, of the *Order of our Lady of mount Carmel*, which was afterwards transplanted from *Syria* into *Europe*, and obtained the prin-

all which occasioned grievous complaints among the ordinary priests, to whom the care of souls was committed, and who considered themselves as the spiritual guides of the multitude." [These Medicants were evidently the Methodists and Evangelical Clergy of those days, and might, for aught we know, merit the popularity which they had acquired as much to the full as their successors of the present day.] "Nor did the influence and credit of the Mendicants end here; for we find that they were employed, not only in spiritual matters, but also in temporal and political affairs of the greatest consequence, in composing the differences of princes, concluding treaties of peace, concerting alliances, presiding in cabinet councils, governing courts, levying taxes, and other occupations, not only remote from, but absolutely inconsistent with, the monastic character and profession." Mosh. E. H. iii. 53.

cial rank among the medicant or begging orders. It is true the Carmelites reject, with the highest indignation, an origin so recent and obscure, and affirm to this very day, that the prophet Elias was the founder of their ancient community. Very few, however, have been engaged to adopt this fabulous and chimerical account of their establishment, except the members of the order, and many Roman Catholic writers have treated their pretensions to such a remote antiquity with the utmost contempt."

"Scarcely, indeed, (says Maclaine) can any thing be more ridiculous than the circumstantial narrations of the occasion, origin, founder, and revolutions of this famous order, which we find in several ecclesiastical authors. They tell us, that *Elias* was introduced into the state of monachism by the ministry of angels; that his first disciples were *Jonah*, *Micah*, and also *Obadiah*, whose wife, in order to get rid of an importunate crowd of lovers, who fluttered about her at the court of *Achab* after the departure of her husband, bound herself by a vow of chastity, received the veil by the hand of *father ELIAS*, and thus became the first abbess of the Carmelite order. They enter into a vast detail of all the circumstances that relate to the rules of discipline, which were drawn up for this community, the habit which distinguished its members, and the various alterations which were introduced into their rule of discipline in process of time. They observe, that among other marks which were used to distinguish the Carmelites from the

seculars, the *tonsure* was one; that this mark of distinction exposed them, indeed to the mockeries of a profane multitude; and that this furnishes the true explanation of the term *bald-head*, which the children addressed, by way of reproach, to *Elishah*, as he was on his way to *Carmel*. (2 kings ii. 23.) They tell us, moreover, that even *Pythagoras* was a member of this ancient order; that he drew all his wisdom from mount *Carmel*, and had several conversations with the prophet *Daniel* at *Babylon*, upon the subject of the Trinity. Nay they go still further into the region of fable, and assert, that the Virgin *Mary* and *Jesus* himself assumed the habit and profession of Carmelites; and they load this fiction with a heap of absurd circumstances, which it is impossible to read without the highest astonishment. \* The Carmelites came into England in 1240, and appear to have obtained an establishment at Lynn not a very long while after. What sort of men they were, the reader can now form some idea.

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SECTION III. *Account of the convent of the Grey Friars, Friars Minors, or Franciscans, in Fuller's Row, now St. James's Street, with a sketch of that religious order.*

This Convent is said to have been founded about

\* See Mosheim E. H. ii. 412, &c.—Let us not think of reproaching the *papists* for the absurdities of their Carmelites:—Our own *protestant* order of *free-masons* can any day match them in the ridiculous extravagance of their pretensions to high antiquity, or empty and pompous boasts of a very remote and dignified origin. Nor were the Carmelites perhaps in any view less respectable than the said protestant order.







J. Sillett del.

J. Lake sculp.

*Remains of the Grey Friars Monastery  
and part of St. James's Chapel.*

*Published March 1849, by W. Whittingham, Lynn*



1264; \* and the founder's name, according to Parkin, was Thomas Feltham, or de Folsham, † the very same person, probably, he mentions as one of the reputed founders of the Carmelite Convent, though the name is somewhat differently spelt. Parkin says, that the Grey Friars settled here about the 52d. of Henry III, (a date, by the bye, somewhat later than that given above,) "and built this convent near Synolf's fleet, on which the mill formerly called Swagg's mill, afterwards the common mill, or town mill, stands." That mill, however, has long ago ceased to stand there, though the memory of it is still preserved in the name of the adjoining lane, which is yet called *mill lane*. In 1287, (as the same writer informs us) on Monday August 7, in the court at Lenn, Adam de St. Omer being then mayor, and Richard de Walsingham, steward, Richard Sefull gave by deed 12*d.* rent *per ann.* which his ancestors used to receive out of a certain area by the church-yard of Saint James's to the west, which the said Adam de St. Omer purchased of Adam Silvester, for the enlarging of the area, where the Friars Minors now inhabit." He also says, that Bernard le Estree, within the same year, purchased of William de Lindesey, in St. James's Street, a certain area, and gave it to enlarge the friars minors' area. In the 7th. of Edward II, as we are further told, these friars had a patent for bringing the water to their house from a spring in North Runcton, called Bukenwell. In the 38th. of Edward III, they had a patent for two messuages to enlarge their manse. From the same writer we also learn, that Richard Peverel, Esq.

\* Beaut. of Engl. vol. xi.      † Parkin 151.



of Tilney, by will, dated March 15, 1423, bequeaths his body to be buried in the church of the friars minors of Lynn Bishop, appoints Mr. John Spencer, vicar of Tilney, his executor—proved May 15, 1424.—The said testator also left a horse of 10*l.* value to the duke of Exeter, to be supervisor of his will, of whom he held lands. This is the chief of what Parkin relates of the Lynn Grey Friars and their convent; except that the house was surrendered by the Warden and nine brethren Oct. 1, 1539, the 30th of Henry VIII.—It is somewhat remarkable that the steeple or tower of this edifice, or of the church of the Grey Friars, though apparently but of slight construction, has survived all the rest, and is still standing: and it may, possibly, with proper attention, stand yet many years. The Dominicans, and Augustinians had probably their towers also, as well as the Carmelites, but they have all long ago disappeared.

Of this famous order of mendicants it will not be easy, perhaps, to give the reader a better idea than by laying before him the following outline of the history and character of its founder, commonly called *saint Francis*. This distinguished personage appeared a short time before his equally distinguished contemporary St. *Dominic*. He was born in 1182, at Assisi, in Umbria. In his youth he is said to have been of a debauched and dissolute character, but at 25, after his recovery from a severe fit of illness, occasioned by his licentious course of life, he became so wholly religious, and so unfit for any other business, that his father threatened to disinherit him; to which he was so far from having any objec-

tion that, in presence of the bishop of Assisi, he solemnly disclaimed all expectation from him, and declared that from that time he would acknowledge only his father in heaven. He is said to have then devoted himself to works of charity of the most humiliating kind: and being one day at church, hearing mass, he was so forcibly struck with those words, Matt. x. 9. *Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves, for the workman is worthy of his meat;* that he cried out, "This is what I seek!" and immediately threw away his shoes, staff, wallet, and all his money, and kept only one coat. He also laid aside his girdle, which was of leather, and made use of a piece of rope in its stead. From this time, in imitation of the apostles, he began to exhort other persons to *repent*; and he did it in a very forcible manner, and with wonderful success, always beginning his discourse with saying "God give you peace."—When he had got *three* disciples, they dispersed, to preach in different places. Some received them with great humanity, looking with astonishment on their extraordinary dress and great austerities, while others made a mock of them and abused them: this however they bore very patiently.

When he had *seven* disciples, he exhorted them to go to different countries, preaching repentance, without regarding any treatment they might meet with; assuring them that in a short time many learned and noble would join them, and they would preach to kings and princes, as well as to the common people. When he had *eleven*

disciples, one of whom was a priest, he wrote out a rule for them, taken wholly out of the Gospels, and presented it to pope Innocent III, who, after making some objection, approved of it, in 1210.—Having obtained this confirmation of his institute, Francis went with 12 disciples and established himself in a church which he had repaired at Pontremoli, and this was the first house of his order, which, by way of humility, he called that of the *minor brethren*, *frates minores*, in French *feres*, in English by corruption *friars*, as the Dominicans had at the same time assumed the name of *preaching brothers*, or friars.—From this place they went forth preaching in the neighbouring towns and villages, not with studied harangues, (but like the methodists of our time) in a manner that made uncommon impression upon the hearers, as they had the appearance of men of another world, having their faces always turned towards those regions whither they were continually directing their audience.—In 1211 they founded several convents, the most considerable of which were those of Cottona, Pisa, and Bologna; and Francis himself, having preached through all *Tuscany*, returned to Assisi, in lent, 1212.

In such veneration was he held at this time, that when he went into any city, they rung the bells, and the clergy and people went to meet him, bearing branches of trees, and singing, thinking themselves happy, who could kiss his hands or feet. That lent he preached at his native place, where he had many converts, and among them St. *Claire*, a young woman of a noble family, who by his direction, though only at the age of eighteen,



abandoned the world, and notwithstanding the remonstrances of her relations, fixed herself in a monastery, first at St. Ange de Pansa, where she was joined by her sister *Agnes*, and then at St. Damien of the order of the Benedictines, which was the first church St. Francis had repaired. Here she continued 42 years, many disciples joining her; and thus was formed the order of *poor women*, or that of *St. Claire*, being the second order of Franciscans.

About 1216, he gave instructions for his disciples to go in pairs, as the Apostles had done. Thus they went into Spain, Provence, and Germany, into which country he sent no less than 60 brothers.—So rapidly did the order now increase, that at a chapter general held in 1219, when Dominic was present, there appeared to be not less than 5000 in it; though they had not been established more than 9 or 10 years.—In June, 1219, pope Honorious III issued a bull, addressed to all bishops, recommending the Franciscans as apostolical men.—Many women, now converted by his preachers, formed themselves into monasteries, but he refused to take charge of any of them, except that of St. Claire.

After this he sent his chief disciples into distant countries with a number of companions, taking for himself and 12 others the mission of *Syria* and *Egypt*. They went forth in the spirit of confessors and martyrs; for when men expose themselves to almost certain death, there cannot be a doubt of their being in earnest. Two going to Africa endeavoured to go into a mosque; and

preaching in the streets, and putting themselves in the way of the king, he first ordered them to be confined ; but as they continued their importunity, he was so enraged, that he struck off their heads with his own hands, while they suffered with great resignation. Francis himself went to Egypt, during the siege of Damietta, and getting access to the Sultan, he offered to go into the fire in proof of the truth of his religion. But the Sultan, who heard him with great patience, did not choose to put him to the test, but admiring his courage, dismissed him with much good humour, desiring him to pray to God, that he would shew him what religion was most agreeable to him. In 1221, seven went to Ceuta to preach to the Moors ; but they were soon apprehended, and not yielding to the command of the king to turn Mahometans, they were all beheaded. \*

In the Rule of the Franciscans, which was fully confirmed in 1213, by Pope Nicholas III, besides engaging to live in obedience to their superior, in chastity, and without property, they also vowed obedience to the pope and his successors. These orders of mendicants, particularly this and that of St. Dominic, were of much greater use in support of the papal hierarchy, and combating heretics than all the orders of monks had ever been. Such was the number of persons in this period

\* The very extraordinary zeal and enthusiasm exhibited by these missionary labourers, which amount to a proof of their sincerity, must have eminently fitted them for such hazardous services, and desperate undertakings as those above described. Between those adventures of the *Franciscans* and some that occur in the early history of that truly respectable protestant religious order, or party, commonly called *Quakers*, there appears a very strong and striking resemblance.

disaffected to the see of Rome, that it is very doubtful whether without this seasonable assistance it could have been supported at all. In this view we cannot contemplate their labours without regret: but even here they may not have been more blameable than some of our present religious orders, who, though seemingly well meaning people, are ever ready to defend, or at least to make excuses for almost every species of corruption.

St. Francis pretended, or, at least, his adherents did so, that the particulars of his rule had been dictated to him by God himself. It is also said of him that retiring to Mount Alverne on the borders of Tuscany, in 1224, to pass the Easter, he saw in a vision the appearance of Christ on the cross, descending from heaven; and when he awoke he found all the marks of crucifixion on his own body. Such tales were doubtless invented to magnify his name and promote the credit of the order. They might answer then, and still in some places; but they are not here introduced as worthy of belief. The Franciscans came into England in the reign of Henry III, and in that same reign established themselves in this town: but their first establishment in England is said to have been at *Canterbury*. Of the probable effects of their making Lynn one of their head quarters, or places of residence, the reader must now form his own opinion. \*

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\* See Mosheim's *Eccl. Hist.* iii. 56. Also Priestley's ii. 233, &c. whence the above account is chiefly extracted.



SECTION IV. *Account of the convent of the Black Friars, Preaching Friars, or Dominicans, in Clough Lane, with a Sketch of that famous order.*

Of this convent, (once perhaps inferior to none of the rest, if indeed it did not exceed them all, both in size and magnificence,) nothing is now to be seen but some old walls, whose thickness and massy appearance seem to indicate that they once sustained a large and sumptuous fabric. It was founded, as Parkin says, by Thomas Gedney, who was then, no doubt, a great and leading character in these parts. The above author does not seem to know the exact time when this convent was built, but it must have been sometime previous to 1272, for he assures us that these friars were then here. Indeed he says also, that they settled here about the time the Grey Friars did, as appears from a writ, *Ad quod damnum*, for a fountain or spring granted them in Middleton, by William, lord Bardolph, called Brokewell, and a certain aqueduct coming from that spring to their convent at Lynn; (for which he refers to *Esch. in Turri Lond. A.º 21, Edw. I. N.º 71.*) We may therefore fairly conclude, that this convent was built almost, if not altogether as early as that of the Grey Friars.

The following is the chief of what that writer has further said, relating to this convent.—“Thomas Thordon aliened to these friars preachers a piece of land 18 feet long and 21 broad, in Lenn Episcopi, in the 3d. of Edw. III. In the same year these friars had a patent to enlarge their house here.—Simon Parche, *alias* Tyler, of Watlyngton, Norfolk, wills, in 1442, to be buried

in the chancel of the friars preachers, or black friars, of Lyn, and gives to the fabrick, de la stalles in the said chancel, to be now made, 16*l*. Reg. Doke, Norw.— The chapel of St. Catherine, in the church of the friars preachers, mentioned in 1497. Reg. Sayve. Norw.— The image of our Lady in the body of the church.” \* Of this convent, as well as that of the Carmelites, we are also told that an *anchorage* belonged to it: by which we are probably to understand, a place in the harbour for mooring ships, or a certain duty, payable by the ships there moored to the said convents. The ground in all ports and harbours being considered as the king’s, this anchorage may be supposed to have been a grant from the crown to those two orders of friars at Lynn.

The same writer further informs us that this convent of Dominicans was surrendered by the prior and eleven brethren on the 30th. of Sept. 1539, 30th of Henry VIII. Its site, as we further learn, was granted, about six years after, to John Eyre Esq. with land there in the tenure of John Kempe. This John Ayre, (our author adds) on the dissolution had 37 messuages, 9 gardens, in the tenure of divers persons, given him by the said king in his 36th. year, and messuages and tenements called Bishops Stath, and an house called the Steward’s Hall, with other messuages and lands here, belonging to the see of Norwich. The site of this convent the said John Eyre conveyed to a priest, from whom it came to

\* There were then probably several images of the virgin in this town, all much resorted to; but that in her chapel on the mount, and this, might be the chief of them.

Thomas Waters, of - - - , who had Edward Waters, and a daughter married to George Baker. The said Edward's son in law, Sir John Bolls, of Scampton, in Lincolnshire, Esq. sold it to one Killingtree, since which time it seems to have passed through a great many hands. The said site at present is thought to be partly the property of the corporation, and partly that of the Carey family. About the garden of the chief mansion of that family are several scattered remains of this ancient edifice. We shall next endeavour to acquaint the reader with the character of that religious order, or fraternity for whose use this convent was originally erected, and in whose occupation it ever after continued.

The Dominicans, although their settlement at Lynn was not anterior to that of the Franciscans, yet they appear to have found their way to England a good many years before them: for we are told, that Dominic, just before his death, sent *Gilbert de Fresney*, with twelve of the brethren into England, where they founded their first monastery at Oxford in 1221, and soon after another at London. In the latter place they became in time so popular, and so much in favour with the corporation, that, in 1276, the mayor and aldermen, as we are told, gave them two whole streets by the river Thames, where they erected a very commodious convent, whence that place is still called *Black-Friars*, for so they were called in this country, \* perhaps from the colour of the habit.

\* In France they were called *Jacobins*, from having obtained the house of *St. James*, at Paris, for their principal church, or convent; the identical place, it is supposed, which gave the very same name in our time to a certain order of politicians, who used to hold their meetings



They were also called *Friars preachers*, or *preaching friars*, from *preaching* being their chief object, employment, or profession; and *Dominicans*, from the name of their memorable founder; an epitome, or outline of whose history and character we shall here subjoin. It will enable the reader, it is hoped, or, at least, help him in some measure, to form a pretty correct estimate of the merits and demerits of these predicant friars; as it may be very confidently and safely expected that they resembled their leader, according to the old adage "Like master like man."

DOMINIC, commonly called *Saint Dominic*, the father of the Dominicans, was a *Spaniard*. He was surnamed *de Guzman*, being descended from an ancient and noble family of that name. Having finished his studies at Palencia, he was made canon, and afterwards archdeacon of Osma in Castille, and then professor of Theology at Placentia. But this he quitted to go to preach after the manner of Francis, which he did in several parts of Spain, giving proof in the meantime of great charity towards the poor and afflicted. Coming into France with the bishop of Osma, he greatly distinguished himself by preaching against the *Albigenses*, and there he formed the design of instituting an order of *preachers*. Fulk bishop of Thoulouse brought him to the council of *Lateran*, in 1215, that he might be examined by the pope. His holiness approving of the scheme

there, and who seem to have too much resembled their former and sainted namesakes in the violence and ferociousness of their tempers and proceedings.

of Dominic, the latter consulted with his followers, when they agreed to adopt the rules of *St. Austin*, but with several additions. They resolved to have no estate in lands, but only revenues. They were then sixteen in number, and the bishop of Thoulouse gave them their first church, that of *St. Romanus* in that city ; and near it he built cloisters, with cells over them, where they might study and sleep. Pope *Honorious III.* confirmed the order in 1216, exempting them from paying tithes of their possessions, and ordering that they should depend upon the diocesan for episcopal functions ; and the prior to be chosen by the free votes of the brethren : so that the Dominicans, at their first institution, were not *beggars*, nor exempt from episcopal jurisdiction, but canons regular.

Next year Dominic sent out his followers in pairs, after choosing a superior, to whom he gave the title of *abbot* ; but all the succeeding ones were called *masters*, and the superiors of particular houses *priors*. He sent four to Spain, four to France, and two more to study there. Hearing of the death of that ferocious and bloody crusader, *Simon de Montfort*, at the siege of Thoulouse, Dominic went thither to comfort the brethren. Thence, in 1218, he went into Spain, and founded two monasteries, one at *Madrid*, and the other at *Segovia*. Thence he went to Paris, where he found thirty brethren: thence he proceeded to Bologna, where *Arnauld*, who joined him at Rome, had been very successful, and had formed a large society. Going to Parma, he there met *St. Francis*, of whom he seemed to enter-

tain a very high opinion) when, after conferring together, they agreed not to accept of church livings which might suggest to Dominic the idea of that profession of poverty which he afterwards imposed upon those of his order. \*

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\* Dominic now proposed to *unite* the two orders, but Francis thought it would be better to keep separate, but in perfect harmony; in which he was probably right, as they would so be likely to act with the greater energy — For some ages these two orders are said to have governed, with an almost absolute and universal sway, both state and church, filled the most eminent posts ecclesiastical and civil. taught in the universities and churches with an authority, before which all opposition was silent, and maintained the pretended majesty and prerogatives of the Roman pontiffs against kings, princes, bishops, and heretics, with incredible ardor and equal success. In short, they were before the reformation what the Jesuits have been since, and what many, who wear the mask of religion, are at this very day, even in protestant states.

— Much as Francis and Dominic might wish their two orders to harmonize, and powerfully cooperate, it seems they did not always do so. There were occasionally some disagreements and disputes between them; one of which is said to have happened in 1243. The Dominicans insisted “that they wore a more decent dress:” to which the Franciscans replied, “We have for the love of God embraced a more austere and humble life, and are consequently more holy:” “Yes” (rejoined the others) “it is true that you go barefooted, ill dressed, and girded with a rope; but you are not forbidden, as we are, to eat flesh meat, even in public, and to make good cheer” — It is to be feared that there have been before now, even between our own protestant sects, in this enlightened country, disputes about points no less unimportant and frivolous. — Another point, of equal moment with the former, upon which these two rival orders disagreed, and which occasioned the most bitter contention between them, was what is called *the immaculate conception of the blessed virgin*, or whether she *was*, or was *not* born in original sin. The Dominicans took the affirmative, and the Franciscans the negative side in this curious controversy. It was carried on with the utmost rancour, for ages, and the most scandalous means were sometimes resorted to, by the respective combatants, in order to obtain an advantage over their opponents. The religious, or rather the papal world was long divided between those two silly opinions, and what is worse, they were kept in a state of continual animosity, each side looking upon the other with perfect hatred. So usefully and commendably did these holy friars employ their time and their talents, and such benefactors were they to mankind!



In 1220 he made some new and more rigorous regulations respecting the *nuns*. In the same year he held the first chapter general of his order at Bologna, when it was resolved that the preaching friars should profess perfect *poverty*, and make that the fundamental principle of their order. It was now agreed that these chapters should be held every year, at Paris and Bologna alternately. At the second chapter general at Bologna eight provincials were chosen to superintend the preachers in the eight provinces of Spain, France Lombardy, Romagna, Provence, Germany, Hungary and England. Presently after this, August. 26. 1221, Dominic died in the 51st year of his age. \* Lest his order should be hurt by the maxims of worldly prudence, he forbade, under the curse of God and his own, the introduction of temporal possessions into the order. The second year after his death he was *canonized*, and so reached the very summit of ecclesiastical dignity and fame.

These preaching friars, as we are told, were so zealous at the first, and considered preaching as so essential to their institution, that they were not satisfied if they did not exhort some, at least one person, every day.

\* It is even said that he *died with great marks of piety*: if so, it is to be hoped that one of those marks was that of repentance, or deep contrition for his many unworthy deeds; for it is certain that he had been, in no small degree, a violent man, and a man of blood.—He was the father even of the horrid inquisition, an exciter of murderous crusades against pretended heretics, and a prime abettor of the shocking barbarities exercised on the hapless Albigenses.—If he really repented of these execrable misdeeds, he must have made a more hopeful exit than the renowned reformer of Geneva, the premeditated murderer of Servetus appears to have done.

Each of them carried with him a copy of the gospel of Matthew, and of the seven canonical epistles, according to the express order of Dominic : but that could redound to the credit of neither him nor them, while they lived in open violation of the most important precepts and the very spirit of those sacred writings. Had they made them, indeed, the ground of their religion, and the rule or guide of their lives, they would have been a blessing to the world in their day, and their memory would have been revered by all good men, to the latest posterity. But they preferred their own rule to that of the New Testament, and the persecuting and murderous ferocity of Dominic to the forbearance and meekness of Christ, and so became the oppressors instead of the benefactors of their species. In short we know not of any material benefit which the former inhabitants of this town derived from the Clough Lane convent, \* or the incessant labours of its preaching friars. The reader however, on this point, as well as all others, must judge for himself.

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SECTION V. *Account of the Convent of the Austin Friars, or Hermits of the order of St. Augustin, in Hogman's Lane, or Hopman's Way, now St. Austin's Street, with a sketch of that religious order.*

This house must have been once a large, respectable,

\* There is still what may be called a convent in Clough Lane, and even a convent of preaching brethren, but of a very different sort from the former, and whose labours, it is hoped, have been of very material and extensive benefit to a large portion of the community.

and stately edifice, inferior to none, and in some respects superior to most, and probably to all others in this town; especially in point of fitness for the accomodation of illustrious personages, or those of princely dignity, who might happen to come this way. It accordingly became the abode, or place of residence of the king and queen, the prince of Wales, the king's mother, and the royal retinue, during their visit or stay here in 1498. Had there been any other house then in the town better adapted for their reception, it would, no doubt, have been chosen in preference, or instead of this, on so unusual and important an occasion. But however commodious, respectable, or stately a structure, this Augustinian convent then was, it has long ago disappeared, and not a stone of it has been left upon another. A gateway, or the arch of a gateway, filled up with brick, but once, perhaps, the principal entrance into the hallowed premises, is all that now remains, or is recognised as having ever belonged to it. Thus our firmest fabrics, though they may endure for ages, are doomed to perish like the very mortals by whose hands they were constructed.

Parkin says that the Augustin friars settled here in the beginning of Edward the First's reign, as appears by a writ *Ad quod damnum*, for a messuage in Lynn, granted by Margaret de Southmere to them. — Inquis. 22. Ed. I. in turri Lond. N<sup>o</sup> 112. He also adds, that they had a patent granted them by Edward II. in his 4th. year, for purchasing, of Thomas Lexham, one messuage contiguous and adjoining, for the enlarge-



ment of their manse or house.—Pat. 4th. Ed. II. pt. 2. m. 14.—He further says, that Licence was granted by Ed. III. to Thomas Drew, William Bitering, John de Couteshale, and John Drew of Lenn Bishop, that they might give and assign five messuages in Lenne, adjoining to the manse of the prior and brethren of hermits of the order of St. Augnstin of Lenn, to the said prior, &c. for the enlargement of their manse, on condition that the reverend father, Thomas, bishop of Norwich, of whom the said messuages are held, will grant his licence to the said prior, &c. And the said king gave licence to Robert da Cokesford, Agnes his wife, and to Richard de Houton and Alice his wife, that they may give one messuage in Lynn, (not held of us, as appears by the inquisition of Roger de Wolfreton, escheator of Norfolk) to the bishop and his successors, on the same condition of granting licence to the prior, &c. of receiving the said five messuages of Thomas Drew, &c.—Teste Rege, dated at Westminster, 6. May. 38. Edw. III.—The bishop's licence was soon after obtained, dated 1. July following.

In the 6th. of Richard II. these friars had a patent for a certain aqueduct, to be made by them from Gaywode.—In the 7th. Henry IV. they had a patent to enlarge their manse: and in the 1st. Henry V. a patent for certain messuages granted to them. For each of these particulars Parkin refers to his authorities; the insertion of which here seems needless.—He also asserts on the authorities of Bale and Holinshed, that in the last mentioned reign, William Wellys, or Wallys, was

a monk here, a learned man, and general of the order, who wrote many books, (which he does not name,) and died in 1421.—It seems therefore that learning was not entirely neglected here among our Austin friars, and that they had at least one learned man in their fraternity.

Our author further informs us, that this house was surrendered 30th. Sept. 1539, 30th. of Henry VIII. by the prior and 4 brethren :” if so they must have been then reduced below their wonted number. But 4 brethren is probably a mistake for 14. which is the number given by Burnet in his history of the reformation, and other authorities.—About 6 years after the above date, this house was granted to John Ayre, who conveyed it to a priest, who sold it to Shavington, a bastard, who by will gave it to - - - Waters, who dying without issue it reverted to Shavington’s heir ; John Ditefield afterwards had it, and his son John gave it in marriage to Thomasine his sister, married to Christopher Puckering, brother to the lord keeper of that name, and they sold it to John Lease, who pulled it down, and sold the stones and the ground to divers persons : so that it seems to have stood a good while after the dissolution, and passed through a great many hands.—Its site is at present partly the property of Martin Folkes Rishton, Esq. Joseph Lawrence Esq. and Mr. Thomas Marshall. For the most part it is now garden ground.

It was to this very order of mendicants, the Austin friars, or monks, or Augustinian Eremites, as they are sometimes called, that the famous Martin Luther belonged

before he quitted the church of Rome, and when he began to oppose the papal corruptions : and it is supposed not to have been then quite so bad or depraved, as some of the other mendicant orders, particularly the Dominicans and Franciscans. However that was, it was, no doubt, bad enough, even in the opinion of Luther himself, for he soon withdrew from it, as well as from all manner of connection with the Romish church. It is to be wished it could also be said, that he and all other descriptions of protestants took special care when they renounced popery, to retain none of its enslaving and persecuting spirit. Most of them, however, quite forgot to do that, and so retained and cherished in their bosoms the very worst part of the religion they had renounced.

As to the religious order now under consideration, the *Austin friars*, or *Hermits of St. Augustin*, we are told that they had for their founder, pope *Alexander IV.* who, observing that the *Hermits* were divided into several societies, some of which followed the maxims of the famous *William*, others the rule of *St. Augustin*, while others again were distinguished by different denominations, formed the project of uniting them all into one religious order, and subjecting them to the same rule of discipline, even that which bears the name of *St. Augustin*. This project, we are told, was put in execution in 1526 : \* so that this order is somewhat younger, or of later origin than any of the other orders of mendicants ; though not much later than the two pre-

\* Mosheim as before, vol. 3.



ceding ones, for all the three sprung up within the same century.—What good or benefit the former inhabitants of Lynn might derive from the erection of this convent in their town, or from the exertions of the Austin Friars among them, is a question which the present writer is not fully prepared to answer. The reader, as in the former cases, is left to think and judge for himself, as he has an undoubted right to do. But whatever good or ill, advantage or disadvantage, benefit or detriment might accrue to the inhabitants from the residence of the said four orders of friars among them, their convents, unquestionably, must have contributed not a little to give additional grandeur and respectability to the appearance of the town. Four large and stately monasteries, with their lofty towers, ranged along the whole town from south to north, must have given Lynn an appearance, especially from the country, very different, and far superior to what it can boast of at present. In short, we may safely say, that it must have appeared before the reformation, from the circumstances just alluded to, as a place of at least double the size and double the consequence that it has done since that period. After all, it is not meant here to disparage the reformation, or to suggest that it did not prove beneficial to Lynn, as well as to the kingdom at large.—It is only meant to assert, that this town, from the great size and number of its monasteries and other religious houses, must have made a very different, and far more splendid appearance before the reformation, than it has done since. But we will here drop the subject, and conclude the present section.

SECTION VI. *Of the Friars de Penitencia, or brothers of repentance, and their Convent—also the College of Priests—with the Hospital and Church of St. John in this town.*

It seems remarkable that out of 1148 monasteries and religious houses, seized upon by the sovereign and suppressed at the general dissolution, no less than 79 were in Norfolk, and 10 of them in this town alone; which must be a large proportion of those of the county, and still larger of those of the whole kingdom. Norfolk was also distinguished, and is so still, for its number of parishes, exceeding that of any other county, even of Yorkshire, though four times its size. This superabundance of parishes and convents, &c. seems to indicate that its inhabitants were formerly of an uncommonly devout and religious, or at least superstitious and sanctimonious cast: which character may be supposed to have belonged to the people of Lynn as much as to any of the rest. At present a very large proportion of the inhabitants of Norfolk, especially in country places, are exceedingly ignorant, boorish and heathenish. Nor do the generality of the established clergy appear to give themselves the least concern about this, or express any serious desire to promote the conversion and civilization of their poor neighbours. The dissenters, and particularly those of them called methodists, have done already far more in this way than the whole body of the national or parochial priesthood: and they are continually enlarging their scale of operation, and extending their labours, with great effect, to the most retired and obscure

places, where the divine power of the Gospel and the happy influence of its moral precepts were hardly ever before felt or experienced.

Of the ten houses suppressed in this town at the general dissolution, one is said to belong to the *friars de Penitentia*. This religious order appears to have sprung up in the same century with the preceeding ones; for we are told that it was instituted in 1221, by the famous *St. Anthony of Padua*, who was born at Lisbon, in 1195, and whose original name was *Ferrand*. After going through his studies with reputation, he entered into a monastery of canons regular, of the order of *St. Austin*, where he continued two years; when, for the sake of greater solitude, he retired with the leave of his superior to Coimbra, where he distinguished himself by his exposition of the scriptures. At this time *St. Francis* was living, and some of his order having suffered martyrdom, in consequence of undertaking to preach to the Mahometans in Africa, they were so much celebrated on that account, that it excited in *Ferrand*, as well as many others, an ardent desire to follow their example, though they should share the same fate. With the leave of his superior, he therefore joined this new society; and entering one of their monasteries, called that of *St. Anthony*, he took their habit and assumed their name."

Presently after this, his zeal actually carried him to Africa; but he was obliged to return, in consequence of a disease with which he was seized upon the coast; but



was driven by a tempest to Sicily, where hearing of a general chapter of his order being to be held at Assisi in Italy, he repaired to it. Tho' he was then little known, the provincial of his order was so much pleased with his appearance, that he took him with him, and placed him in a convent called *the mount of St. Paul*. After some months, his superiors procured him holy orders, and sent him, together with some other priests, to Forli, where he distinguished himself by his preaching. Being greatly concerned at the progress of heresy then in the northern parts of Italy, in order the better to prepare himself for encountering the heretics, he went through a course of theology at Vercelli, under a famous doctor there; but he soon surpassed him in knowledge, and was thought equal to any undertaking.

Being sent by his superiors to undertake the office of guardian to Limiges in France, in order to the conversion of the heretics in that place, it happened at one time, that his business as a preacher required him to be in one place, and his office of guardian in another: and this was the occasion of the first of the many miracles that his historian ascribes to him, and it was of a very singular kind: for it is asserted that he was actually in both places at the same time. After an earnest prayer for this purpose, he without leaving the pulpit in which he was preaching on a good friday, appeared in the choir, and sung the lesson which was his part of the service there. At Montpellier also, he once preached in the dome at the same time that he was singing

hallelujah in the choir of the church. After this his whole life seems to have consisted of little more than a series of miracles, and many of them of quite an original and extraordinary kind ; so that it must have required much ingenuity to devise them. \*—Some of them may be here inserted by way of sample, and to enable the reader to judge of the probable effect or consequence of the settlement of Anthony's disciples, *the friars de Penitentia*, in this town.

When Anthony was at one time preaching in a temporary building, constructed of wood, he apprized his audience that the devil was about to terrify and hurt them, but that no harm would eventually happen to any of them. Accordingly while he was preaching, the devil untied the ropes by which the boards were held together, so that the whole erection came down. But when it might have been expected that many of the persons assembled would have been crushed to death, or at least maimed, not one of them was found to have received the smallest hurt!—Another time a pious woman, much attached to Anthony, who had a son of a reprobate character, when she was attending one of his sermons the devil came in the form of a courier, and delivering a letter informed her that her son was dead. This news threw her, and the audience in general, into such disorder, that the congregation was breaking up ; when Anthony cried out that the news was not true, that it was the devil that had brought it, and that the young man was alive, as they would soon be convinced ; ac-

\* Priestley's Gen. Hist. Christian Church, vol iv.

cordingly, while he was speaking he entered the place, and the devil absconded."

Something more extraordinary than any of the preceding miracles, was exhibited at Rome. For being required by the pope to preach to a congregation, consisting of people of very different countries, assembled for a crusade, they all heard him speak in their different languages, though he spoke in Italian only.—But the astonishing miracle exhibited at Rimini, contributed more to the fame of Anthony than all his other miracles. Preaching in that city, which abounded with heretics, and the people refusing to hear him, he went to the sea side, followed by a great crowd; when, the sea being remarkably calm, he addressed himself to the fishes; saying, "Since men will not hear me, come you and hearken to what God will tell you by me." Immediately on this the sea was covered with the heads of fishes, which with open mouths fixed their eyes on him; and notwithstanding their hostility to each other, they mildly and humbly (as it is said) without moving their fins, or making the least motion in the water, attended to him. After a discourse of some length, he exhorted them to praise God; and since they could not do it in words shew some visible signs of reverence. On this they all bowed their heads, moving them very gently, and with gestures expressive of humility and devotion, acknowledged their obligation to God, and signified their approbation of what had been addressed to them. The spectators greatly amazed (and well they might: for who could avoid it?) looked sometimes on the fishes, and



sometimes on the preacher ; and being reproved by him for their infidelity, thus upbraided by the mute fishes, they fell on their knees, asking his pardon, and promising to live and die in the catholic faith. He then pronounced a blessing, both on the men and the fishes, and they departed with great joy. ‡

Such were some of the numerous miracles which Anthony is said to have worked in his lifetime, exclusive of others said to have been wrought afterwards at his grave, and which were perhaps no fewer. Of those who have heard of these mighty and wonderful works of Anthony, the far greater part in all ages, even to the present day, have believed the report, and admitted the reality of the miracles: which, however, will not establish the fact, that they were actually performed, any more than the faith of the mahometans in the alleged miracles of their pretended prophet will establish that fact, or prove that the miracles ascribed to him did really take place. In each case we have a sad specimen of that easy and miserable credulity by which poor human nature has often most wretchedly disgraced herself, and unintentionally aided the cause and triumphs of imposture. Nor will it follow from the abundance of false miracles that have been heard of, or because the world has been so often imposed upon by them, that there never have been any real ones: on the contrary, all counterfeits seem invariably to imply the existence of what is real and genuine; and that, it is presumed, may be proved to be the case here. But this is not a place to enter largely upon this subject.

‡ See Priestley as before.

Anthony had been some years among the Franciscans before he instituted the order *de Penitentie*, which was in 1221, when he also fixed at Padua, where he sometimes preached in the open air to 30,000 persons, who came to hear him from all the neighbouring towns. His discourses, it is said, had a wonderful effect in converting prostitutes, delivering prisoners, reconciling enemies, procuring restitution of usury, remission of debts, &c. He was indefatigable, and preached every day. Many persons expressing a desire to embrace the order, he was unwilling to dissolve so many regular marriages, and dispeople the country: he therefore gave them a rule, according to which they might serve God in a similar manner in their houses, living in some measure like monks, but without austerity.— This is the substance of what we have learnt about this order. He died in the year above mentioned at the age of 36, and was canonized the next year. We are told that he was ten years among the Franciscans, if indeed it can be said that he afterwards properly quitted them for the friars *de Penitentie* are accounted a 3rd. order of Franciscans. \* We are told that they settled at Lynn before the 5th. of Edward I. and that their house here was dissolved by Henry VIII. † but where it stood cannot now be ascertained. Parkin seemed inclined to indentify it with the well known convent of the Grey Friars, but that idea or supposition seems not at all admissible, as our apparently most accurate accounts of the religious houses dissolved here represent that of the friars of this order as quite distinct from the said convent.

\* Priestley, 2. and 4.

† Beauties of England, vol. xi.



and this seems corroborated by Parkin's own assertion, that "in 1307, Roger Flegg was vicar general of the order of friars de Penitentia in England at Lenne." ‡ From the peculiar constitution of this order it seems rather probable that its houses or convents might be neither so large nor yet so numerous as those of most of the other orders. As that at Lynn might be but small, there may not be much reason to wonder that its site is not now discoverable; that being also the case with some others of our smaller religious houses.—With all its profound and extravagant reverence for its founder, St. Anthony, and its unlimited credulity, or faith in his pretended miracles, this does not appear to be the worst of the popish orders, but rather one of the better sort of them, as it seemed earnestly to set its face against many of the prevailing vices of the times, which must have somewhat checked the progress of immorality and licentiousness.—These friars might therefore be of some use here: but if they were so, and did some good, in partially checking the progress of vice and immorality, is it not also to be feared, on the other hand, that they did no less, or rather much more harm, in checking likewise the progress of virtue and true religion, and promoting to the utmost of their power an intolerant, persecuting, and antichristian spirit? \* That such was really the fact

‡ Parkin, 152.

\* Very few, perhaps, if any, could be named of our religious orders, or christian sects but what have done some good in the world, and as few, probably, that have not also done harm. In estimating the character of a religious order, sect, or party, we are apt, as it is very natural, to set the one against the other: in doing which it too often becomes a matter of doubt, which of the two, the good or the harm, preponderates, or exceeds in quantity. When that happens, which



seems unquestionable; so that these friars had little room to boast of their good doings. But we will now quit them, and proceed to

*The COLLEGE.* This edifice stands near the Town Hall, and is now inhabited by Mr. *Toosey*, a respectable merchant. It is by far the most entire, and best preserved of all the religious houses that were here dissolved; and were popery again to become predominant among us, this fabrick might be very easily converted or restored to its original use.—Parkin gives of it a very odd and confused account, as if it had been a part of the Priory, though somewhat detached from it—“The cell, or college of priests (says he) was near the Guild

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is much less seldom than one could wish, it is a sad and painful case. In our own country, at this time, the diversity of religious sects and parties is very great. Some of them are vastly popular, and others otherwise. Much do we daily hear of the exemplary zeal, and the laudable, persevering, and successful exertions of those who assume the name of *orthodox* and *evangelical*, both in the establishment and out of it. These reports seem generally well founded. Much good, no doubt, has been done: and we may venture to add, much harm also. The great error of these zealous religionists lies in their spirit, or rather in their not knowing what manner of spirit they are of, which is evidently not the spirit of Christ. All who cannot pronounce their *Shibboleth*, they teach their converts to view with an evil eye: and all who go about to do good in the name of Christ, they are sure to forbid or revile, and so render all their benevolent endeavours useless, as far as lies in them, *if they follow them not*, or are not of their party. They may perhaps plead *apostolical example*, but it is not countenanced, but expressly condemned by Christ, who enjoins a very different sort of conduct. Until they therefore think proper to comply with that injunction of his, they will have no reason to boast of the excellence, or *evangelicalness* of their spirit. [see Mark 9. 39. Luke 9. 50.] All religious sects and parties, would do well to consider, that the spirit they are of, is what always forms the most important and decisive part of their character.—More of this when we come to the present religious state of Lynn.

hall, and the prior's house was somewhat remote from it, by St. Margaret's Church." It does not seem, however, that it had in fact any connection with the said priory: and it is certainly a place of much later erection; probably by no less than 3 or 400 years.—Mackerell also takes some slight notice of it, and says, "Not far from the church was a certain college, founded by Mr. *Thomas Thorisby*, as by the inscription carved upon the door still remain . . . . *Magistri Thome Thorisby, Fundatoris hujus loci.*" This Thomas Thorisby, the munificent founder of this college, was one of the great men of Lynn in the latter part of the 15th. century, and for sometime after, as appears from our lists of Mayors, among whom his name occurs three different times; 1st. in 1477, again in 1482, and lastly in 1502. That he was a magistrate of a serious and religious character, seems to admit of no doubt; but how many of his successors, including those of the present day, have thought the better of him for that, is a question that appears involved in no small uncertainty. The College is said to have been founded about the year 1500, and it was dissolved about 30 years after, so that it was not long appropriated to the use for which it was designed by the founder. It does not appear to whom it went at the dissolution, nor do we know through how many hands, or how many different families it has passed, from that to the present time. Latterly, and for many years, it has been the residence successively of some of our principal mercantile families, without any material change in its external appearance. Of its original constitution we have not obtained any

particular information, and the above being the substance of what we have learnt concerning it, our account of it must be here closed.

Another House, suppressed here at the general dissolution, was St. John's Hospital: of which the information we have been able to obtain is very imperfect and scanty. Its very site, like that of the friars de Penitencia, seems no longer discoverable; and yet it was evidently, in its day, a place of some note and consequence here, and had a chapel, or church, as it is usually called, attached to it. *Fox*, the martyrologist, mentions St. John's church, or the church of the Hospital of St. John, in this town, as one of the places where the memorable *Sir William Sautre*, parish priest of St. Margaret's, when taken up for heresy in the reign of Henry IV. was obliged to read his recantation. *Parkin* takes very little notice of it, except quoting what *Fox* had said: and the same is the case with *Mackerell*, with this slight difference, that he in one place hazards a conjecture, that the site of this church was the same with that of the old grammar school, which was taken down some years ago. But if the church stood there, the hospital itself must also, in all probability, have stood close by, if not contiguous; and that seems not very likely, in so confined a situation. We know of no existing record that any way corroborates this conjecture, unless it be a hint in our tables of memorable events, "That in the year 1506, St. Margaret's church was suspended, and the christenings were performed



in the charnel belonging to St. John's chapel:" but it seems too vague and obscure to establish the point. It is indeed very clear and certain that there did exist here formerly the Hospital and church of St. John, and that they were suppressed at the general dissolution, but as we know no more about them, we must here dismiss the subject.

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SECTION VII. *Account of St. Mary Magdalen's Hospital, the Lazar Houses, St. Lawrence's Hospital, &c.*

The Hospital of St. Mary Magdalen was one of the most ancient of those religious houses that were suppressed here by Henry VIII. It is said to have been founded by Petrus Capellanus, in the reign of King Stephen, in honour of St. Mary Magdalen. It consisted of a prior and twelve brethren and sisters; of whom ten, including the prior were sound, and three unsound, or leprous; some ecclesiastical, and some secular; who were bound to perform rites and prayers for the souls of certain men who had departed this life, *viz.* for the soul of Petrus Capellanus their founder, the souls of popes, bishops, abbots, priors, kings, queens, and others, their benefactors; as appears by their ancient book of *obiits* and *Orisons*, and by the ancient instrument of articles, which the brethren and sisters were bound to observe: and all, or most of the lands given to

the said hospital were for the maintaining of prayers for the dead, as appears by divers deeds and charters, without date, of the first donations of those lands. \*

In Mr. King's MS. volume there is a larger account of this ancient hospital than has been given by Mackerell and Parkin. We have there the ancient instrument of articles, or the fundamental rules of the fraternity, in latin, under XVIII heads: annexed to which is the following account—"This Instrument of Articles was made in the year that Petrus Capellanus died [A. D. 1174.] and himself consented, with the two archbishops, for ordaining the same."—Then follows what has been given by Mackerell, that "this ancient hospital continued in a prosperous state from its first foundation about 400 years. But after the statute of 1st. Edward VI. was made, for dissolving all colleges, chauntries fraternities, &c. this, with the lands &c. came to, and were invested in the crown, by the said statute. The fraternity, however, was not then broke up or dispersed, and might, perhaps, have been still continued, but for the breaking out of what is called Kett's rebellion. A party of the rebels were encamped at Rising: and they attacked Lynn, in hopes of surprising it, but being repulsed and disappointed, they, on their return, fell upon this hospital, "which they violently entered, and not only robbed the poor people there, and expelled them out of the house, but took away all their common stock, and rased their chapel and most part of the buildings there down to the ground: by means of which

\* See Mackerell, 194. ———and Parkin, 146.

barbarous usage, the said hospital was so impoverished, wasted, and spoiled, that from thence forward it was quite destitute of brethren and sisters, and utterly relinquished, saving that the mayor and burgesses of Lynn maintained some poor people there, and endeavoured to uphold the said ancient hospital, out of their charitable disposition, for the purposes aforesaid.” \*

“Nevertheless (says the author of the MS. account) some covetous persons, taking advantage of the depressed state of the said hospital, procured divers letters patents of concealment, from the crown; some of the site of the same, and some of other parcels of the lands and possessions belonging to the said hospital, intending to convert them to their own private lucre. But the said mayor and burgesses, (still having a great care that the said lands and possessions should be preserved for charitable uses) did purchase of some of the concealers the site of the said hospital, and a great part of the lands thereunto belonging, and at their great costs and charges supported and defended the same against all other concealers and their agents, purposing always to erect anew the said hospital, and employ the revenues thereof for the sustentation of poor people.

“But finding both by the advice of the king’s council [counsel] and their own, that all the said patents of concealment were defective and utterly void in law, through many imperfections therein, and that (notwithstanding the said patents) the scite of the said hospital and the

\* Mr. King’s MS. —also Mackerell, 195.



lands and possessions thereof still remained in the crown—therefore they made humble suit to the king's majesty [James I.] for a grant thereof, and, of his Highness' gracious favour and pious inclination to works of charity, they obtained Letters Patents of grant unto the mayor and aldermen, as well of the scite of the said hospital, as also of the lands, &c. thereunto belonging, who by the same are created governors thereof, and made a body corporate for the defence and maintenance of the said hospital new founded by his majestie." [An abridgement of those Letters Patents, transcribed from the latin copy, is here subjoined, and is as follows.

“JAMES by the grace of God king of England, &c. to all to whom these Letters shall come, greeting, &c.—Whereas a certain ancient Hospital or Almshouse was founded and erected in Gaywood, called the House or Hospital of St. Mary Magdalen—And whereas divers lands, tenements, and hereditaments, were given and granted for the maintenance and relief of divers poor and needy men and women therein for ever—And we being informed, that certain evil minded men, covetously pursuing their own private lucre, have endeavoured utterly to demolish the state of the said Hospital, pretending some defect in the foundation thereof, or that the same have been dissolved—We favouring the sustentation of the poor, and such like charitable deeds, do of our special grace, for us, our heirs and successors, grant all that right, title, &c. which we have or might have in the premises, fully and graciously to be conferred and extended towards the establishment of the said Hospital,

for poor and infirm men and women to dwell therein: and for the causes aforesaid the same shall for ever hereafter be called by the name of The Hospital of St. Mary Magdalen, of the foundation of king James, consisting of a Master and Warden and 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, or 5 poor needy men and women, who shall likewise be called, The Brethren and Sisters of the said Hospital, from henceforth for ever.—And for the more effectual performance of this our grant on our part, We have chosen nominated and appointed our well beloved Peter Tudman to be the first and present warden, or master of the said hospital, and to continue in the said office for and during his natural life, unless for some default, trespass, misdemeanor, &c. omitted or committed by him, contrary to the constitutions or ordinances hereafter to be made and ordained, he shall be from thence removed —And moreover out of our own especial grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, We have also chosen, nominated, &c. our well beloved John Tilney and Avis his wife, Isabel wife of the said Peter Tudman, John Pillow, Alice Briggs, and William Mason, to be the first and present brethren and sisters of the said hospital, there to be relieved and maintained during their natural lives, unless for some fault or misdemeanor they shall from thence be removed.

“And that this our pious and charitable intention may take the better effect, and that the lands, tenements, goods and chattels, and hereditaments, towards the maintenance of the said hospital and the warden or master, and the poor brethren and sisters &c. may the more

effectually be given, granted, enjoyed, possessed and disposed, We will, and by these Letters Patents for us our heirs and successors of our like special grace &c. do grant ordain and constitute that the Mayor of our Burgh of King's Lynn that now is, or hereafter shall be, and all the aldermen that now are or hereafter shall be, shall from henceforth forever be our Body corporate and politique, in deed, fact, and name, by the title of The Governors of the lands, tenements, revenues, possessions, and hereditaments of the Hospital of St. Mary Magdalen upon the Cawsey between Lynn regis and Gaywood, of the foundation of James king of England, &c.—And by the said name of Governors, &c. to be always hereafter so called, termed, and nominated, for ever: and by the same to have perpetual succession, and to be both able and capable in law to obtain, receive, have, and possess the manors, lands, tenements, meadows, pastures, feedings, rents, reversions, remainders, and all other hereditaments whatsoever, to them and their successors for ever, as well from us our heirs, &c. as from any person or persons whatsoever; as also all goods and chattels for the maintenance and relief of the said hospital, the warden or master, and the poor brethren and sisters which shall, from time to time, live and be sustained therein.—And we do likewise by these presents for us and our heirs &c. grant unto them and their successors to have a common seal for all matters and businesses concerning the said hospital &c.—And that they by the name aforesaid may sue and be sued, answer and be answered in any of his



majesty's courts or elsewhere within this kingdom of England.

“And we will that whensoever it shall happen, that the said master or any of the said 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, or 5 of the brethren shall die or be removed, it shall and may be lawful for the said governors (whereof the mayor to be always one) within 20 days after, to choose another in their room—And we will and grant that the said Warden or Master and his successors shall take his corporal oath on the evangelists for the due performance of his office, before the mayor for the time being, in the Guildhall of the said Burgh—And we will and grant that the said governors, or the greatest part of them (whereof the mayor to be always one) and their successors with the assent and consent of the bishop of Norwich for the time being, may make and constitute such and so many good and wholesome statutes, laws, &c. in writing, as well concerning the celebration of divine service every day in the said hospital to the honour of God, as for the government, election, expulsion, punishment and direction of the said master and poor there, and also concerning their stipends, salaries, liveries, habits, and all other necessities whatsoever, as also concerning the ordinary, preservation, and disposing of all the lands, tenements &c.—And also may give and grant to the master and poor there, such useful things as they shall think fit: and may revoke, change, determine, augment, alter, and make new the same as they think most convenient; which said statutes, laws, and ordinances, to be made and constituted as aforesaid we straitly charge

and command to be kept inviolable, from time to time forever, yet so as the same be not contrary to the laws and statutes of this kingdom of England.

And further for the continual relief and sustentation of the said hospital we have given and granted, and by these presents do give and grant to the said governors all the lordships, manors, messuages, lands, meadows, pastures, feeding-grounds, liberties, franchises and hereditaments whatsoever, lying in Gaywood, East Lexham, Dunham, Narford, West Lexham, Westwinch, and Holkham, in our said county of Norfolk, or any where elsewhere, which formerly were any part of the possessions of the said hospital, however before this time called or reputed, and which had not indeed though not by the law alienated, bargained and sold by the prior, brethren and sisters of the said hospital, and of which his Highness from the beginning of his reign had not taken any yearly profits, revenues, or rents.—And further we do give and grant unto the said governors, &c. To have, hold, and enjoy all the aforesaid premisses, together with court-leet, frank-pledge, liberties, franchises, goods and chattels waved of felons as well as *felo de se*, as of all other felons, fugitives, out-lawries, and taken in exigent, or in any other lawful way, right or title, they shall be convicted, condemned, extrahur deodands and all rights, jurisdiction, franchises, liberties, privileges, commodities, advantages, possessions, emoluments and hereditaments whatsoever, as fully, freely, and absolutely as any prior, brethren and sisters, as well

sound as sick, ever had, held, or enjoyed heretofore, &c.—To have, hold, and enjoy all the privileges aforesaid to the only use and behoof of them the said governors, &c. in free, pure, and perpetual alms, for all rents, services, claims, and demands whatsoever, to be rendered, paid, or done to us our heirs &c. And we do likewise give and grant unto them all and singular, issues, fines, rents, reveuues, annual profits whatsoever, of all and singular the premises aforesaid, whatsoever due before the grant of these Letters Patent, or within 60 yeats last past without giving any account of the same. And further we, our heirs, &c. will for ever acquit, exonerate, and keep indemnified to the said governors, &c. all and singular the premises aforesaid, against us our heirs &c. of and from coridies, rents, fees, annual pensions, portions and sums of money whatsoever, &c.

And we will and straitly charge our Treasurer, Chancellor, and Barons of our Exchequer, their heirs and successors, and all other our Receivers, Auditors, Officers and Ministers whatsoever, upon producing these our Letters Patents, or the enrollment thereof without any other Breve or Warrant from us, that they make or cause to be made to the said governors &c. a full and plenary discharge of all the corodies, fees &c. whatsoever, for which these our Letters Patents shall be to them a sufficient warrant and discharge.—And we will and grant that these our Letters Patents and the enrollment thereof shall be in all things as firm, strong and good, sufficient and effectual in law against us, our



hells &c. in all our courts and elsewhere within our kingdom of England, without any further confirmation, licence, or toleration from us or our successors to be procured or obtained.—Notwithstanding the misnaming, misreciting, or not reciting the aforesaid premisses by these Letters Patents, Or the not finding only the office or inquisition of the premisses or any parcel thereof whereby our title ought to be found before the making of these our Letters Patents, Or the misreciting or misnaming, or not reciting or not naming any demise or grant of the premisses or any part thereof, on record or not on record, or any way whatsoever before this grant:—Or the misnaming or not naming any village, hamlet, parish, race, or county, in which the premisses or any part thereof be:—Or the full, true, and certain mention of the names of the tenements, farmers, occupiers of the premisses or any part thereof:—Or any defect in the certainty, account, or declaration of the true yearly value of the same as aforesaid:—or any other defects in not naming aright any one tenement, farmer, or occupier &c. or the statute made in parliament in the first year of the late king Edward VI. our predecessor, or the statute made in parliament in the 18th year of the late king Henry VIII. our progenitor.

“And further we will, straitly charge and command the aforesaid governors &c. that they expend, convert, and apply all and every the premisses aforesaid towards the relief and maintenance of the master and poor of the said hospital, and for the repairition and defence of all and singular the premisses aforesaid, and to no other

use and purpose whatsoever. — Yet so that express mention be made of the true yearly value, or certainty of the premisses or any part of them, or any gifts or grants made before this time by us or any of our predecessors to the governors aforesaid and their successors, or any statutes, acts, ordinance, provision or restriction to the contrary before this had made published or ordained in any thing cause or matter whatsoever notwithstanding. — In Testimony whereof we have caused these our Letters to be made Patents. Witness ourself at Westminster this 22d. day of April in the year of our reign of England, France, and Ireland the 9th. and of Scotland the 44th.

*Per Breve de privato sigillo.*

“After the grant aforesaid, the mayor and aldermen endeavoured by all fair means, to prevail with the concealers and usurpers of the many lands, &c. to yield and deliver up the quiet possession thereof to them, the said governors, without suit in law; but not able to succeed therein, they thereupon exhibited a bill of complaints into [in] the High Court of Chancery, against those who withheld the same, and had likewise gotten into their hands sundry Deeds, Evidences, Writings, Charters, Copies of Court Rolls, and Muniments, concerning the said Hospital, for about thirty years before the king’s majesty’s Letters Patents: whose names are as follow, viz. Sir Philip Woodhouse; Thomas Thoresbie Esq. Henry Bastard, Gent. Henry Baker, Gent. Thomas Baxter; Robert Anderson; Richard Cross; Jefferie Pell; Robert Large; Robert Trollop; Will-

iam Simpson, clerk; Robert Say, junr; Robert Spence, Gent. Robert Webster; William Collis, als Glover:—Who having given in their several answers to the said bill, an order was made by the court, that the complainants should set down in writing, the particular lands and fold courses by them claimed, together with the evidences for proof thereof, that the same belonged to the said hospital, and how much the defendants have of those lands in their several possessions, &c. which they did as followeth”—[The lands, &c. in question, are then particularly specified and described, being chiefly in East and West Lexham, and Dunham and Gaywood. They are denominated “*Lands of the Lepers*, or Spittle lands, pertaining to the brethren and sisters of the House, called THE SPITTLE, upon the cawsey between Lynn and Gaywood”—the whole amounting to 305 acres—The complainants having thus specified their claims, the suit went on.]

“After divers hearings on both sides, in the high court of Chancery, for about four years together, the plaintiffs being prepared to move the lord chancellor with all speed for a decree, and for their costs and damages, Sir Philip Woodhouse defendant, (who had most of the lands, &c. in his hands,) solicited and intreated Sir H. Hobart, knt. and bart. Lord chief justice of the Common Pleas, to hear and determine the cause between them, which being consented to by the plaintiffs, his lordship gave his opinion, that the plaintiffs had right to all the lands and foldcourses, in the boundary before mentioned, in such manner as they have been claimed



by them, excepting the messuage Warm, and 5 acres thereunto adjoining. And therefore to prevent further suit and expences on both sides, his lordship advised Sir Ph. Woodhouse to suffer that which he could not contradict, viz. that a decree should pass of all the lands and foldcourses (except as before excepted) for the plaintiffs, as in law and equity it ought to be: but withal mediated and intreated the counsel of the plaintiffs, in behalf of the said Sir Ph. that in regard so much of the lands and fold courses as were in the possession of Sir Philip, did lye so intermixed with his lands, it would be a great annoyance to him, and little profit to the plaintiffs, if the same were severed, that therefore it would please the plaintiff's counsel to consent that the plaintiffs, after the decree passed, should make a lease to him of the premises aforesaid for 99 years, at the yearly rent of 16*l.* viz. their foldcourses at East Lexham, being in his possession for 10*l.* per annum, and all their grounds in West Lexham and great Dunham, also in his possession at 2*s.* 6*d.* for every acre per annum, and that the said Sir Philip Woodhouse should be discharged of all the rents, issues, and profits of the said lands and fold courses, for the time past; whereof the plaintiff's counsel agreed, and promised to procure the same, which conclusion on both sides being made known the next day to the lord Chancellor, by the plaintiff's counsel, his lordship upon their motion, ordered and decreed their possession of the said lands and foldcourses, unto the plaintiff's, not having any relation to the said agreement made before the Lord chief justice, as aforesaid, saving in the ex-

ception before excepted, and in the omitting of damages and costs, which was promised in the last order.

“Afterwards, that is, upon the feast day of the decollation of St. John Baptist, next following, Sir Philip Woodhouse came to Lynn, and in the presence of John Spence, then Mayor, Thomas Oxburgh Esq. recorder, the aldermen and the rest of the Society then assembled in the common council house, the said Sir Philip did bring the draught of a Lease, (perused by the Lord Chief Justice Hobart, of the Spittle fold course of East Lexham, and of the lands which, by the mediation of the said lord chief justice, were to be demised by the mayor and aldermen to the said Sir Philip, a copy of which being formally delivered to the said mayor, &c. they caused the same to be engrossed on a pair of Indentures to that purpose, bearing date 17. May, 1615, then last past, (upon which day the last order for the decree was made) which Indentures were openly read, sealed, and delivered interchangeably in the said council house the said day of the decollation, being the election day for the succeeding mayor. The said Sir Ph. sent a fat buck, and gave his honourable promise, that he and his heirs should every year after, during the time of his Lease, give a like fat buck to every mayor for the time being towards their festival upon the said day; which was, for sometime, faithfully performed.—About a year after a Lease was granted by the mayor, &c. of all those their fold courses, foldage, and sheep pasture in the town of great Dunham for 250

sheep, to be goeing, fed, and depastured in and upon all the common, and common pasture fields and arable grounds there, as well demesnes as otherwise, anciently accustomed, to Sir Thomas Hogan, Henry Bastard, Henry Barker, Thomas Baxter, Thomas Burton, for 21 years, from Lady day 1616, for 10*l.* per annum, free and clear from all manner of quit rents and charges whatsoever. Both which sheep walks, with the lands thus demised, were anciently in Lease to the lords of the manor of East Lexham, from the old hospital, under the yearly rent of 20*s.* 4*d.* as appears by two ancient rentals, [copies of which are preserved in Mr. King's MS. and are here given in the note below. \*]—The flocks of

\* FOR THE WHOLE YEAR.—MAWDLYN, on the Cawsey between Lynn and Gaywood.

	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
<i>Imprimis</i> , Of Mr. Thoresby, for Sayer's Marsh.....	xx.	0.
<i>Item</i> , Of Nich. Newgate of Holkham, for 5 acres of meadow in the same town, for a year.....	} ii.	6.
<i>Item</i> , Of Wm. Clarke of Wotten, for one acre of pasture nigh Holme's dale in Gaywood: pay by the year.....	} 0.	i.
<i>Item</i> , Of Winter and Goodwin, of Rounceton, for 11 acres of pasture in Sechie; who pay by the year.....	} x.	0.
<i>Item</i> , Of Robt. Jerviss, for a fish bale, lying in the north marsh; who payeth by the year.....	} x.	0.
<i>Item</i> , Of Sir Nicholas L'estrage knt. for two sheep courses and other lands, lying in West Lexham, East Lexham, and Dunham; who payeth by the year.....	} xxiii.	iiij.
<i>Item</i> , Of Thomas Brown of Lynn, for a meadow lying in Gaywood; who payeth every half year, <i>xs.</i> .....	} xx.	0.
<i>Item</i> , Of Philip Bailie, for 4 acres of meadow, lying on the west side of Mawdlin, and pays by the half year, <i>xxs.</i> [qu. <i>xiiis.</i> ].....	} xxiiij.	0.
<i>Item</i> , Of Robt. Hobbs, now in the tenure of Mr. Graves, for a meadow lying in Gaywood, paying quarterly, <i>vs.</i> ...	} xx.	0.
<i>Item</i> , Of Thomas Miller, of Lynn, for a meadow lying on the side of the high way, who payeth quarterly <i>iiis. vid.</i>	} x.	0.
<i>Item</i> , In the compass of Congham, 7 roods of Hebbe land, lying in Congham: pay by the year one bushel of malt.....	} mod., brasii.	



the lords of Dunham went and were depastured in and upon the common of Dunham—as more appeareth by an ancient survey upon oath, both of the freehold and copy

## S W 2

*Item*, Of Mr. Fr Bastard, for a close lying without Gannock gate, payeth every half year xvij. viij*d*. . . . . } *s.* *d.*  
xxxiii. iiij.

*Item*, Of Robt. Jarvis of Lynn, for a meadow next the Lord's close in Gaywood, paying by the year . . . . . } xii. iiij.

The following statement from a paper published by *Parkin*, and written, as he took it, in the reign of Elizabeth, may be here subjoined, as it may cast some further light on the state of the possessions of this Hospital at that period—"Robert Wylson master of this house, married Isabel, late wife of Thomas Hesketh late master—hath six acres joining to the said house now in their hands, which is all that they have in occupation in their own hands.—Also Mr. Thorisbye occupies one marsh lying in Geywode and Myntlyn, the old rent thereof was 20*s.* *per annum*, at least, and he is to have of the house for rents belonging to the manor of Geywode 42*s.* 3*d.* *per annum*.—Mr. Spence occupies one close lying in Gannock, which is called 10 acres, but in truth is 14 acres at the least, and he pays but 33*s.* and 4*d.* *per annum*.—Park of Holme holdeth 11 acres in Sechyth, and pays but 33*s.* 4*d.* *per annum*, well worth 4*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* *per annum*.—Also Mr. Strange hath a fold course and lands in Lexham, which wont to pay to the said house 23*s.* *per annum*, and by the space of 30 years hath [remained] unpaid, and by the report of them that know it, it is well worth 4*l.* *per annum*.—Other lands in Congham and Creak Abbey, the value whereof is not yet made.—Also Wrothes of Gaywode holdeth one pigthle worth 6*s.* *per annum*, and pays nothing.—*Item*, one close or pigthle lying in Geywode by South Wotton, hath been let for 8*s.* *per annum*, but now none will give above 3*s.* or 2*s.* 8*d.* *per annum*.—*Item*, One rede dole in Geywode containing 8 acres, the old rent is 8*s.*—*Item*, Mr. Pell occupieth 3 acres by the house; the old rent was 10*s.* and now 20*s.*—*Item*, Thomas Gybson of Lynne occupies one close of 3 acres by the house; the old rent was 20*s.*, now 40*s.*—*Item*, He occupies . . . acres lying by Maudelyn Bank, and pays 24*s.* *per annum*, and it is worth 50*s.*—*Item*, two acres by Dersingham Lane, worth 20*s.* *per annum*, the old rent 10*s.*—*Item*, In Geywode fen 3 acres, the old rent 6*s.* now 15*s.* *per annum*.—Roger Lauson has an acre and a half, old rent 10*s.* now 26*s.* 8*d.* *per annum*.—Six acres lying by Salters Load; the old rent 10*s.* now 20*s.* *per annum*.—*Item*, A whole piece there, and pays 4*s.* 6*d.* *per annum*.—*Item*, 5 acres in Narford, old rent 9*d.* now 3*s.*—*Item*, 5 acres in Hockold, let for 2*s.* *per annum*, worth 5*s.*"—  
[See *Parkin* 148.]

hold tenants, made in the 4th Edward 2. which is in the hands of Henry Bastard, Gent. now [i.e. about 1724.] Lord of the manor of Great Dunham: [a true copy of which is subjoined; it is in latin, and too long to be inserted here, as it fills near four folio pages.—] After some recapitulation, by way of summary, of the above account, the writer proceeds to treat of the then present state of the hospital (i.e. now near a 100 years ago) and he observes again, “that the house was first granted by the founder for the society of a prior and 12 men and women, called *brethren and sisters*, by which last style and title it was again newfounded by the afore said Letters Patents of K. James I. as appears by the 6th paragraph thereof. But this mixture or medley of sexes being not afterwards well and rightly approved of, it have been since thought necessary to alter and change the same \* and instead thereof to establish a *sisterhood only*, consisting of a master and eleven poor widows, † who have formerly lived well and creditably in the world; but are not usually admitted under the age of sixty.” ‡—The above account was probably taken from the *MS. vellum book*, which Parkin mentions, § and is supposed still to exist among the town archives. It appears to have been written in 1617, under the sanction of the then mayor, recorder, and aldermen, and bears date on St. John’s day that year, when *John Wallis* was mayor, *Richard Stonham*, mayorelect, *Thomas Oxburgh*,

\* We cannot learn when this change took place.

† *A sisterhood only*, consisting of a *master*, &c. has somewhat of an *hi-bernian* sound.

‡ Mr. King’s MS. volume.

§ Parkin, 145.

recorder, and the following made up the remainder of the then magistrates, or aldermen, viz. *Thomas Baker, Thomas Gibson, John Spence, Matthew Clerk, John Atkyn, Thomas Soame, John Wormell, Thomas Leighton, William Doughty, William Atkyn, and Thomas Gurlyn*.—As these seem to be the persons who had been so active, a few years before, in recovering the lands belonging to our Magdalen Hospital, and in promoting the reestablishment and perpetuation of that charity, their names are worthy of being kept in remembrance; for they certainly deserved well of their country, and especially of the town of Lynn. The above law-suit, which they so successfully carried on, appears to have been one of the most justifiable and commendable of any that this corporation has ever been engaged or concerned in. Some of our corporation law-suits in more modern times were, it seems, of a different character.

For more than thirty years after the date of king James' Letters Patents, and till sometime after the commencement of the civil wars, things went on well with our Magdalen Hospital, or Gaywood Alms-house. Its subsequent history, down to some part of the last century, is given by Mackerell, as follows \*—"In the year 1643 this hospital suffered another dissolution, being purposely burnt down, when the Earl of Manchester came with the parliament forces to besiege the town of Lynn, at that time fortified, and standing out for the king, whereby it was then become utterly dissolved for

\* It is taken from Mr. King's MS. volume almost verbatim, though not always in the exact order in which it there stands.



some time.—But in the year 1649 the corporation being obliged to build it anew, which is very commodiously done, as it now appears, with two courts, \* a chapel, and convenient apartments for the master, brethren, and sisters to dwell in, it was thought fit to put up the two following Inscriptions in proper places, to denote the occasion of this last disaster. The first is over the arch, upon a square free stone, as you enter into the second court, [and reads thus.]

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THIS HOSPITAL WAS BURNT DOWN  
AT LYNN SIEGE, AND REBUILT  
1649, NATH. MAXEY MAYOR, AND  
EDW. ROBINSON Alderman and Treasurer.

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[The other] inscription, with the arms of the corporation in a shield over it, is engraven on a marble stone, which is affixed over the portal next the road, [and is as follows.]

---

THOMAS RIVET, MAYOR,  
ANNO 1650. E. R.

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“Thus after divers revolutions we now see it again erected, established, and committed to the care and man-

\* There are not properly two courts: the space between the portal and the proper court, consists of two rows of little gardens divided by the walk, or entrance into the said court.

agement of two of the elder aldermen of the corporation, chosen and appointed annually from among the rest of their brethren, the governors, for that purpose; who with their joint advice and consent, ordain rules and orders for the better guidance and direction of the society; as may be seen fairly written in a Table hanging constantly up in the chapel, whereby every one of the members is obliged to be present to hear divine service daily read by the Master, after the tolling of the bell, and not to neglect their duty in attending, (unless upon just cause to be given to the master) under the penalty, or mulct prescribed in the said order.—The improvement of the lands and revenues of the hospital have been so far advanced of late [1724] by the provident and prudent management of the two last worthy gentlemen, the two deputed governors thereof, that the poor have now an addition to their former salaries, of twelve pence per week to the master, and sixpence to each of the women, or sisters; and it is to be hoped they may in a little time be yet further advanced. \* —

\* At the time referred to above, that is, about 1720, or 1724, the allowances to the pensioners residing in the said house, were as follow,

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
To the Master of the Hospital, per week.....	0.	4.	6.
To eleven poor widows per week, at 2 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> each.....	1.	7.	6.
To the Master yearly, one Chalder and half of coals...	1.	10.	0.
To eleven widows yearly, one Chalder of coals each...	11.	0.	0.
For 15 Sheaves of Sedges to the Master for kindling.....	0.	2.	6.
For 10 Sheaves to each of the Sisters (in all 110).....	0.	18.	4.
Total.	£ 96.	14.	10.

Besides repairs and other contingencies." [See Mr. King's MS. and Mackerell.

From the above period to the present time, the weekly allowance to the master and sisters has been gradually advancing, but not in propor-

The parish church which they are appointed to resort to on sundays, is that of Gaywood, in which [parish] this hospital is situated, where they have a convenient pew, purposely provided for them to sit in : but they may go to any other church or chapel at Lynn, or elsewhere, when and as often as they please. —So much shall suffice to have been spoken of this ancient hospital, being without the walls and limits of the borough of king's Lynn, though wholly depending on the corporation there."†

tion to the advance in the price of the necessaries of life ; at least not so during the present reign, and especially this latter part of it. For the last fifty years the weekly allowance of the sisters, has been from 3*s.* 6*d.* or 4*s.* to 5*s.* till the commencement of the present year [1810] when it was advanced from 5*s.* to 7*s.* and the master's allowance from 7*s.* to 10*s.* —This pleasing change in the situation of these pensioners has been ascribed to the laudable and humane exertions of the present acting governor and treasurer, *Edmund Rolfe Elsdon Esq.* who is supposed to have acquitted himself, in this situation, more respectably and commendably than any of his predecessors, for the last fifty years at least. Besides advancing the weekly allowance of the pensioners, he has also put the hospital itself and premises in a state of thorough repair, at the expence of 400*l.* or more. All this he has been enabled to accomplish by advancing the rent of the lands according to their present value : and it is expected that he will be able soon to make an additional augmentation to the weekly allowance and comforts of the poor pensioners, whose concerns he so laudably superintends. Till he was appointed to this situation their condition was very miserable, and every year getting worse and worse, with little or no hope of amendment. In short, Alderman Elsdon, in the character of acting governor and treasurer of our Magdalen Hospital, has deserved well, not only of the pensioners of that house, but also of the public at large. His successors it is hoped will not fail to profit by his praiseworthy example : and it is to be wished that the managers of all similar charities would make a point of acting in like manner. Very different, indeed, by all accounts, has been the conduct of too many, if not of most of those entrusted with the superintendence and management of our charitable institutions throughout the kingdom, by which they have proved themselves utterly unworthy of the confidence reposed in them, and rendered their very names and memories detestable in the eyes of all honest men.

† Mackerell, 194, &c.



From the date of the above account (which seems to be brought down to 1737, when Mackerell's work was published) to the present time, our information concerning the said hospital is not so correct, particular, or ample as we could wish.—It appears however, that divers changes have taken place from time to time since king James's grant was obtained: first from a mixed society of brethren and sisters to that of *sisters only*: at first, it seems, these sisters were to be *all widows*, but latterly there is said to have been a departure from that plan, and *old maids* have been admitted, in some instances, as well as widows; which seems not at all objectionable. Changes also, of course, there have been in the weekly allowances of the respective pensioners; but not (at least during the present reign) in proportion to the changes in the price of the necessaries of life. Half a Crown a week, which was the allowance a hundred years ago, was to the full as good as ten or twelve shillings a week now: and yet the poor women during any part of this long jubilee reign (when the *shilling* has sunk in value to *three-pence*, or a *groat*, at most) never had above five shillings a week, till the commencement of the present year: Nor had they been long in the receipt of even so much as five shillings, or more than *four and sixpence* a week, which was their stated allowance for sometime till within these very few years. They must have been, therefore, till this present year, and during most part of this long reign of boasted prosperity and glory, in a very unenviable, miserable, ragged, and half starving condition, although the acting governor

was generally a man of fortune: and a late one immensely so; but they never fared worse than under his inspection, for his humanity or charity did not appear to be commensurate with his wealth. In short it is well for these poor pensioners that the acting government of their house is at present in the hands of a gentleman that seems determined to do them justice, and promote their comfort and happiness to the utmost of his power.

As to the *four Lazar Houses*, or Lepers Hospitals, said to have been suppressed here at the general dissolution, it is likely that one of them was attached to, or connected with our Magdalen Hospital, for it appears to have been *partly* founded for unsound or leprous persons. This therefore may be supposed to have been one of those four suppressed houses. Of the other three, one was probably at *West Lynn*, one at *Cowgate*, and the other at *Hardwick*. The disease, for the relief of those afflicted with which these houses were founded, is said to have been introduced, or brought from the East into this country, and to Europe, by the madbrained crusaders, who became many ways a terrible grievance and pest to their respective countries and nations. It was a proof, certainly, of the humanity of our countrymen, in those times, that houses were erected and endowed for the reception and relief of persons afflicted with so grievous and incurable a disorder. So little do we know about the order, or economy, or laws of these *Lazar Houses*, that we must here necessarily dismiss the subject.

Of the *Hospital of St. Lawrence* very little is known, except that it was one of the four Lazar houses and stood at Hardwick, or *Herdwyk Dam*, as Parkin calls it. He says that in the 11th. of Edward III. Matthew Herlewine conveyed by fine and trust to Thomas Duraunt, parson of Clenchwarton, William Duraunt of South Lynn, and John Kervyle of Wygenhale (along with other possessions) the advowson of the hospital of St. Lawrence at Herdwyk Dam, together with the rents, homages, services, &c. of the master of the said hospital, of the prior of Wirmegey, the prior of Westacre, and of John de Lenn."—He also says, that John Duraunt Esq; granted to Robert Synkclere and Agnes his wife the hospital, or house of lepars, with the chapel of St. Lawrence situate on the cawsey of Hardwyke, by Lenne, with the appertenances for their lives, from the feast of St. Michael in 27. Henry VI. paying to him, his heirs and assigns, for every brother and sister entering into the said hospital, and made by the said Robert and Agnes, 20*d.* and it shall not be lawful for the said John, his heirs &c. to put in or out, any brother or sister during the lives of the aforesaid Robert and Agnes."—He further informs us, that "in 17. Edward, IV. Edmund Bedingfeld, lord of the manor of Hall Place, (in the hamlet of Seche Parva, in South Lynn) and in a court held of the said manor, grants to *John Norris*, \* vicar of South Lynn, the scite of the Hospital of St. Lawrence (which was then burnt) till it was rebuilt." †

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\* The builder or founder, probably, of the old parsonage house there, which has the name still over the door: in which case, that house must have stood between 3 and 400 years. † Parkin 164, 165.



SECTION VIII. *Of the Red Mount, and our Lady's Chapel there—also her Chapel by the Bridge which still bears her name—St. Ann's Chapel, with those of St. Catherine, St. Lawrence, &c.*

From the particular situation of the Red Mount, (on the *out-side* of the town-walls, and within the wet foss which flanked those walls,) there can be little doubt of its being once a small fortress, or fortified and castelated place; so that it might without much impropriety be denominated *a castle*. What will further corroborate this opinion is a fact noticed among our remarkable or memorable occurrences, that in 1469 king Edward IV. came to Lynn with a great retinue, and was lodged in this place; from which it may be very naturally inferred and concluded, that it was then well fortified; for the king in his then situation, (retreating before Warwick,) would hardly have been lodged without the walls in an unfortified place. From the same premises it may be likewise fairly inferred, that it was also a *large* and *sumptuous* structure—Edward's numerous retinue requiring it to be of the former description, and his royal dignity of the latter: had it been *small* it could not have accommodated so large a company, and had it been *mean*, the *king* would not have been lodged there—\* But however strong, large, or sumptuous the

\* The author of the Norfolk Tour, speaking of the Red Mount, gives the following account of the said king's visit to this place—"When Edw. IV. and his brother, the duke of Gloster, fled before the great earl of Warwick, on passing the Washes in Lincolnshire, at an improper time, they lost their baggage and money; and arriving at Lynn, October 2. 1470, [other accounts say 1469] lodged one night in this building, which the historian erroneously calls a *castle*." [But the historian was, perhaps, more correct than his corrector.]



*J. Sill de.*



*E. J. Sargent fecit.*





edifice on the Red Mount then was, most of it has long ago disappeared, and the little that now remains is chiefly the chapel, which was once of considerable celebrity, but is now in a dilapidated state. Of this curious piece of antiquity, one of the most remarkable that Lynn can boast of; the following description has lately appeared in a popular and respectable work, which we have often before referred to—"At the eastern extremity of the town is a curious ancient building, called *THE LADY'S CHAPEL*, or *The Red Mount*. It has been erroneously named a *castle*, but is evidently an ecclesiastical structure † It consists of an octagonal wall of red brick and is constructed on a very singular plan, of which, perhaps, not a similar example is to be found in the kingdom. Within the exterior wall is a handsome cruciform chapel, measuring from east to west seventeen feet seven inches, by fourteen from north to south, and thirteen in height. The roof is formed of stone, with numerous groins, &c. and exactly resembles the much admired ceiling of King's College Chapel, Cambridge. This curious building is in a dilapidated state, and it is much feared will soon fall a victim to neglect and wantonness. Such a singular edifice should be carefully preserved, and as the expence to effect this would be trivial, it is hoped the corporation, to whom it belongs, will not neglect it, and thereby entail on themselves the perpetual reproaches of history, and the lasting censures of antiquarian record."‡

† But though the said chapel is confessedly an ecclesiastical structure, there might be once about it erections of a military, or castellated character, which would account for its obtaining the name of a *castle*.

‡ Beauties of England, vol. xi. p. 294.

At what time this notable fabrick was erected, does not appear; but we may pretty safely conclude that it was at a period subsequent to the conquest, and perhaps not before the 12th or 13th century. It appears to have been dissolved, or laid by, at the reformation, and it was defaced, as Parkin says, before the 3rd. of Elizabeth. As there has been little or no attention bestowed upon it ever since that time, it is no wonder that it should be now in so ruinous a state. It has been often said that this place was, in its day, the receptacle of the pilgrims, in their way to, and from Walsingham. If so, it amounts to a pretty good proof, that it was very capacious, and well endowed, or furnished with ample revenues; for the pilgrims to Walsingham, like those to Loretto, swarmed on all the roads that led thither; but on no road more, or perhaps so much as that through Lynn, as all the devout people from the northern and north western parts of the kingdom must have passed this way, perhaps by hundreds at a time. That house must have been both large and wealthy, that could lodge and entertain such hosts of travellers.— Another reason for pilgrims frequenting our chapel on the Mount might be, because there was there also an image of the Virgin, which had attained to some celebrity; not indeed like that at Walsingham, † but evi-

† What led to the great celebrity which this place obtained for centuries, was the widow lady of *Ricoldie Faverches* founding, about 1061, a small chapel in honour of the virgin Mary, similar to the *Sancta Casa*, at Nazareth. Her son confirmed the endowments, made an additional foundation of a *Priory* for Augustine canons, and erected a *conventual church*. At the dissolution, the annual revenues of the monastery were valued, according to Speed, at 446*l.* 14*s.* 4*d.* That its wealth should have been immensely great, is not surprising, when the fame of the



dently beyond any thing of the kind at Lynn. We may therefore be very sure that the holy travellers to Walsingham would pay a greater regard to the chapel of our Lady on the Mount than to any other religious place in this town. It has been observed before, that the offerings to this image of the Virgin on the Mount exceeded sometimes the offerings to all our other images and in all our other religious houses here, numerous as they were. In short, we may venture to affirm, that in former days no one place in Lynn was of greater note or celebrity than the Red Mount, and especially our Lady's Chapel and Image there.

Of the *Chapel of our Lady on the Bridge*, we know much less than of that on the Mount, though our knowledge of the latter also is but very imperfect. When the former was erected, whether before or after the other, or why there should be two chapels in this town dedicated to the Virgin, are questions which we are unable to resolve. They were both probably more ancient than some of our other religious houses: but they were dissolved, or laid by at the same time with most of the rest. They were probably demolished not long after, and this on the bridge much more entirely than the other.

image of our Lady of Walsingham is taken into the account; for it was as much frequented, if not more, than the shrine of St. Thomas a Becket, at Canterbury. Foreigners of all nations came thither on pilgrimage; many kings and queens of England also paid their devoirs to it; so that the number and quality of her devotees appeared to equal those of the Lady of Loretto, in Italy.—The celebrated Erasmus represents it as a place of such transcendent splendor as would lead one to suppose it the seat of the gods. The monks had contrived to persuade many, that the *galaxy* in the heavens was a miraculous indication of the way to this place: hence that was called *Walsingham Way*."—See Beaut. Engl. xi. 313.



Parkin says, that this chapel was defaced before the reign of Elizabeth, as appears by an inquisition taken in her third year. Our Lady's Gild in Lynn had seemingly some connection with this chapel, as well as with that on the Mount; but we know too little of the constitution and circumstances of that ancient fraternity to pronounce any thing positively on this head. \* Some small remains of this chapel, converted into a little dwelling, stood, till very lately, on the eastern side of the bridge; but when the said bridge was widened, by order of the paving-act commissioners, those remains were entirely removed, and there is no longer one stone upon another of that consecrated and venerated fabrick, or the least sign or indication, except in the name of the bridge, that such an edifice ever stood there.—The modern substitutes for this and the other ancient chapels, here suppressed and demolished, are *four* very decent and commodious dissenting meeting houses; one in New Conduit Street, one in Clough Lane, and two in Broad Street; all, or most of them, at present pretty well attended. Of each of which a particular account shall be given in the course of this work.

\* Having again touched on the subject of the Gilds, the author begs leave here to correct an inaccuracy or error that escaped him in mentioning St. Ethelred's Gild at page 439. It now appears to him that this fraternity took its name from a female personage, named *St. Etheldreda*; and he has, since the above page was printed off, observed the following notice of it in Parkin (134.)—"John Alcock, bishop of Ely, June 3, 1490, granted 40 days pardon, or indulgence, to all the brethren and sisters of the guild of St. Etheldreda, in St. Nicholas's chapel of Lynn. at the altar of St. Etheldreda the most holy virgin, there founded, and to all who should hear mass at the said altar, and to all who said *quinquies* before the said altar, the Lord's prayer and the Salutation *quinquies*. *Reg. Alc. Ep. El.*"—So great, in the said bishop's time, was the encouragement to enter into St. Etheldreda's Gild, and to hear mass at her altar, or say *quinquies* before it!

Of *St. Ann's Chapel* very little is at present known. That it stood somewhere near *St. Ann's Fort*, and that the latter took its name from it, can scarcely be doubted. The stones that are still to be seen in some of the adjacent walls did once, in all probability, belong to this ancient consecrated structure. \* We have, however, no reason to suppose that it was a very large edifice, but rather one of our smaller size chapels, like that of *our Lady on the Bridge*, and some others. It probably stood contiguous to other houses, without any yard, or burying-ground adjoining; which may be one, and, perhaps, the chief reason, why its site has so entirely disappeared, so as to baffle, or render fruitless every attempt to discover the exact spot on which it stood. All that can now be fairly concluded is, that it must have been somewhere near the Fort.

The site of *St. Catherine's Chapel* seems to be involved in still greater uncertainty than even that of *St.*

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\* Some have thought that the bishop's town house stood by the Fort, and that the said stones might belong to that edifice, which must be a mistake, as it appears, from old records, that that house stood by *St. Nicholas's chapel to the west*, which must be about where Dr. Redferne or Mr. T. Allen's house now stands.—That the bishop had a house here in the time of Henry III. appears, according to Parkin, from *Plita Corona apd. Lenn*, 41 of that reign. This same house seems to be alluded to afterwards, in *Plita Assis. Norw.* 4. Hen. IV. when it was found, that John Wentworth, mayor of Lenne Episcopi, and the commonalty, had unjustly disseized Henry, bishop of Norwich, of his free tenement here, 100 acres of land, and 20 acres of pasture, he being seized of it in right of his church," &c. From this it would appear, that Wentworth was not on good terms with the said bishop, which may account for his competitor, Pettipas, advising his friends to seek his lordships interference; and it appears from his Letters, that the bishop was favourable to him, and hostile to Wentworth.—Parkin 155.—also Mr. K's MS.

Ann. By something that the present writer has somewhere met with, he has been led to think, that this chapel stood without the East Gates, and at no great distance; but as he cannot now recollect upon what he founded that opinion, he will not take upon him here to defend it, or assert that the chapel actually stood there. Parkin owns that he did not know where it stood, but says that it was defaced before the 3rd of Elizabeth, as appears by an inquisition then taken. He also says that it is "mentioned in 1497, and the charity Gyld of the town of Lenn," which, as he supposes, may allude to our houses of lepers. But those houses were probably not under the direction of any one of the gilds, but rather of a particular religious order, called *the order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem*; of which, however, we know not enough to give here a particular account of it. But as to the chapel in question, Parkin further informs us that "in 5 Richard II. Henry le Despencer, bishop of Norwich, wrote a letter to Roger Paxman, mayor, and to the burgesses of Lynn, wherein he desires that they would, for the love they bore for the bishop, grant part of the *house of St. Catherine* to one John Consolif, late servant to his brother, the lord le Despencer, there to live a solitary life, upon the alms of the good people; the other part of the house belonging to the archdeacon of Norwich, being before granted to the said John Consolyf. † This shews that there was here formerly a House or Hospital, as well as a Chapel, dedicated to St. Catherine; to which house or hospital, in all probability, the said chapel belonged: but whether they pertained

† Parkin 141.



to our Lazarettos, or were founded for some other purposes, it is very difficult now to determine. Beside this chapel of St. Catherine, there was here another chapel dedicated to her, in the church of the friars preachers, Dominicans: \* but this was nothing very remarkable, as we had here also more than one chapel dedicated to the Trinity, as well as to the blessed virgin, if not likewise to some others.

The *Chapel of St. Lawrence*, (like those of St. Catherine and St. John) appears to have belonged to the *Hospital* of the same name, and therefore must have stood at Hardwick, contiguous, probably, or very near to the said hospital. That house being one of our Lazarettos, its use, or designation is sufficiently obvious. We learn from Parkin, that John Duraunt Esq. in the 27 Henry VI. granted to Robert Syncklere and Agnes his wife the hospital, or house of lepers, with the *chapel of St. Lawrence* situate on the cawsey of Hardwyke, by Lynn—Also that William Walton, Esq. and Catherine, his wife, daughter and heiress of the said John Duraunt Esq. conveyed by fine, in Hillary term, 36th. year of the same reign, to Sir Thomas Tudenham, knight, the *advouson of the chapel of St. Lawrence*, with the manor of Hall Place, and divers other possessions. † This chapel seems therefore to have been an endowed place, whose advouson was deemed an object of no trivial consideration. The hospital to which it belonged, as well as the rest of our Lazar houses, may

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\* Parkin, 152.

† Ib. 165.

be supposed to have been in some sort of subjection to the master of the order of St. Lazarus, whose chief residence, or station, appears to have been at Burton Lazars, in Leicestershire. Parkin mentions a remarkable deed which he had seen, whereby brother Richard de Sulegrave, knight, master of the whole order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem, and all the brethren of the said order, dwelling at Burton, by common assent and council of the whole chapter, grant to Alan de Kele, burgess of Lenn, his heirs and assigns, a certain piece of land, called Lazar Hill, lying by the common wall of the said village, containing 7 perches and 7 feet in breadth, on the north side; and 10 perches and 14 feet, on the south side; 5 perches and half broad, on the east side; 6 perches broad in the middle, and 7 on the west side, &c.

\* This seems, by the names of the witnesses, to have been as early as the reign of king John. "This piece of land," (our author adds) "I find afterwards in the hands of Rd. Spany and John de Teryngton, in the reign of Richard II." But the present writer is not able to point out this remarkable spot, or yet to describe the nature and extent of that jurisdiction which the master and chapter of the order of St. Lazarus had over the Lynn Lazaretto.

Most if not all the rest of the smaller chapels were attached to, or connected with our different churches and convents, of which several belonged to St. Margaret's church: we will therefore give here no separate account of them. Such little chapels and chauntries were pretty

\* Parkin, 125.

numerous here, and mark the character of the inhabitants, and particularly the most devout part of them, in those times. There was here also in former ages, at least, one ‡ *hermitage*, or retreat of an anchoret, and that was at the Crouch, or *Crutch*, as it is now commonly called. Of this remarkable place, and its adjacent cross, Parkin gives the following account—"The mayor and commonalty petition William (Bateman) bishop of Norwich, begging his favour towards John Puttock, to admit him as a hermit, who had, in the bishop's marsh by Lenn, on the sea shore, in a certain place, called Lenn Crouch, made a cave there, till he could build himself a proper mansion; purposing, as he declares, to spend all his time, by your permission and license, in the service of God there: and the said John Puttock has there erected a certain remarkable cross, of great service for all shipping coming that way, of the height of 110 feet, at his own great cost and charge." \* This occurred as long ago as 1349. To our thinking the Crutch must be a most improper and strange place for a hermitage, where people are continually passing and repassing, and those, at least many of them, some of the rudest and most lawless of the whole population. How the hermits did there in popish times we know not, but we are apt to think that they would not fare very comfortably there in this protestant age.

‡ The author is sometimes ready to suspect that the two *anchorages*, mentioned in some of the foregoing pages, were in fact no other than the lodges or retreats of some anchorets, though he has there given the word a different explanation. (see p. 507.) \* Parkin, 142.



SECTION IX. *Account of St. James's Chapel (now the Workhouse) from its first erection, in the twelfth century, to the present time.*

The founder of this chapel, as well as that of St. Nicholas, according to our best accounts, was WILLIAM TURB, or *Turbus*, alias *De Turba Villa*, or *Turbeville*, the third bishop of Norwich, who was promoted to that see in 1146, \* in the reign of king Stephen. It was probably built before the end of that reign, as Parkin refers to a certain charter of that bishop, which proves that it was in being at the commencement of the next reign. † Both this of St. James and that of St. Nicholas were chapels of ease to the church of St. Margaret. These three churches had in those times abundance of officiating priests, or chaplains. The great fraternity, called *Trinity Guild*, alone, maintained no less than *thirteen*; *six* for St. Margaret's, *four* for St. Nicholas's, and *three* for St. James's. ‡ How many they had besides, does not appear; but they had, no doubt, several more. This chapel is said to contain in length five score feet, and in breadth 24 feet; exclusive of the cross aisle, and a chapel attached to it, dedicated to the Trinity. The altar of St. Lawrence stood somewhere in this chapel, and, at the east end of it, an image of our Saviour, to which devout folks were wont to bring their offerings. A particular division of the town appears to have been at one time consigned or appropriated to the officiating services of the chaplains or clergy of this chapel, comprehending, probably, all on the sides next to it of Damgate, Broadstreet, Blackboystreet and

\* Beaut. of England, xi. 23.    † Parkin, 140.    ‡ See p. 453.









Codlin lane. St Nicholas's clergy appear also to have had appropriated to them another division of the town: hence we find, that "on Friday before the feast of St. Tiburtius and Valerian, in the 35th of Edward III. it was ordered by the commonalty, assembled in the Guild hall, that the clerks of St. James's in Lynn, for the future, shall carry the *holy water* from the East Gate of Lynn, through all the south part of Damgate, and through the whole street called Webster's row; and that the clergy or clerks of St. Nicholas' shall likewise carry from the aforesaid gate through all the north part of the aforesaid street of Damgate." \*

At the general dissolution this chapel was, it seems, laid by, and shut up, which appears an odd and unaccountable circumstance, as it had not any connection with the convents, being merely a parochial place of worship. We are told that it was pulled down, all but the cross aisle, in 1549, (by order of the mayor and corporation, it is supposed,) when it had four belis, which were worth, with the bell of the charnel-house, CC*l*. We are further told, that there did also, in the mean time, belong to the said chapel and charnel-house, stone, iron, and glass, to the value of one hundred marks: also timber and lead to the value of 300*l*. also plate, jewels, and stock, to the value of 200*l*. also certain lands and tenements in Lynn, to the yearly value of 5*l*." † All this property appears to have come into the hands of the mayor and corporation; not very fairly and honourably, it seems; for we find that it rather be-

\* Parkin, 140. † Parkin, as before.

longed to the Dean and Chapter of Norwich, who, about seventeen years after, on what occasion does not appear, relinquished their right and claim to it, by a formal deed to that purpose, a copy of which is given below. \* This was about the year 1566. † From that period it lay, probably, in ruins till 1581, when it was, at the expense of the corporation, prepared and made a

\* “Be it known unto all men by these presents, that we *John Salisbury*, dean of the cathedral church of the holy undividable trinity of Norwich, and chapter of the same church, have remised, released, and clearly for ever, for us and our successors, quit claim, and do by these presents remise, release, and quit claim to the mayor of the burgh of Lynn Regis, and to the burgesses of the same; and also to *Robert Gervise* and *John Towers*, all manner of quarrels, trespasses, variances, controversies, debates, and demands, which we have, and ought to have, for the *Lead, Glass, Bells, Iron, Brass, Laten, Timber and Stones*, of the *Chapel of St. James* in King’s Lynn aforesaid, for all and every other cause and causes whatsoever, concerning the same Chapel. In witness whereof to these presents, We the said Dean and Chapter have set our chapter seal this 8th day of January, in the 8th. year of the reign of Elizabeth, by the grace of God, Queen of England, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c.

REGISTRATOR.

Sealed and delivered, to the use of the Mayor and Burgesses of King’s Lynn, and Robert Jervis and John Towers, in the presence of John Debney of Norwich, David Coytmor, Alexander Auger, and Richard Lasher.”  
[Mackerell, 217.]

† In 1560, five or six years anterior to the date of the above deed, as we learn from Mackerell, “several gentlemen came to Lynn, and would have taken the state of St. James’s church, by order of the Councils Letters, but were opposed and resisted by the corporation.” But if they actually came by the authority of the privy council, as the above seems to imply, it must be rather odd that the corporation should venture to oppose and resist them: but so it is said. see Mackerell 227.—The same writer says, p. 177. that in 1567 the *pinnacle* of St. James’s chapel, (by which we may suppose he meant the *spire* of it,) “was taken down, and the steeple built flat.” So that the tower appears to have been left for some time in its original state, after the chief part of the chapel had been pulled down.

place for the manufacture of bays, &c.—How long it was occupied for that purpose is not said; but we learn that the undertaking did not succeed.—About a century after, in the year 1682, it was repaired and fitted up, by the liberal benefactions of the corporation and principal inhabitants, and converted into a hospital, or workhouse for fifty decayed old men, women, and poor children; a good endowment and provision being made for their work, instructions, and maintenance, and for putting the children out to trades.—On that occasion were made and adopted the following

“*Rules, Ordinances and Statutes* made and established by the mayor and burgesses of the burgh of King’s Lynn in the county of Norfolk, for the good government of the Hospital or Workhouse of St. James, there erected and founded, and of the children’s being, and to be placed therein.—*Imprimis*, That the children be instructed in their duty towards God, and in good manners.—That the master for the time being shall cause the children every Lord’s day, both in the forenoon and afternoon, constantly to repair to the parish church of St. Margaret, diligently to attend divine service and sermons there.—That some fit person, to be elected by the mayor and burgesses, shall daily read the prayers and collects appointed for that purpose in the chapel of the said house, every morning by eight of the clock, and every evening by four of the clock precisely, all the children there attending with becoming reverence.—That such person, after prayers so read at the



times aforesaid, shall teach the children to read for the space of one hour and an half, twice in the day, by calling together four at a time, and no more, whilst the rest are at work.—That such person every sunday, after divine service in the afternoon, calling all the said children into the chapel, shall instruct them in the church Catechism appointed for children, for the space of one hour, concluding with the prayers and collects.

“ITEM, *For their Recreation and Correction.* That the children be kept at work between our *Lady* and *Michaelmas* from Six of the clock in the morning till Twelve at noon; and between *Michaelmas* and our *Lady* from Eight till twelve, and in all afternoons from One to Seven: the time for prayers, reading, and refreshment, excepted. That on festivals and holy-days observed by the church, and every thursday after three in the afternoon, they be allowed reasonable recreation. That for offences committed, gentle and moderate chastisement be given; and such as will not thereby be reformed, be sent to the house of correction, to be there punished.

“ITEM, *For their Diet, Cloaths, Firing, and necessary Provisions.* That three days in the week they have once in the day competent allowance of flesh meat hot, and three other days like allowance of other hot provision, to be ready at twelve at noon; and on the other day fit provision; as also a reasonable breakfast and supper every day of the week. That all sorts of provision, bread, beer, and meat, and all other victuals,

be good, fresh, and wholesome. That once every year, a month before christmas, they be allowed new suits of cloaths of the usual colours, and new shifting, shoes, and stockings, so often as it shall be necessary and convenient, and washing allowed them. That out of six chaldron of coals to be allowed to the master, a convenient fire be kept in the working-room all the cold season of the year. That such children as shall appear to be sick, be removed into a room for that purpose; and if any be infirm, or taken with contagious distempers (such as are catching) that special care be taken to lodge them apart from the others.

“ITEM, *For the Visitation, Overseeing, Defraying necessary charges, and Regulation of Abuses.* That on the usual day of electing the corporation officers in every year, the mayor, aldermen, and common-council, or the major part of them, shall elect and choose *three* discreet and fitting persons to be *governors* of the same Hospital, or Workhouse, for the year from *Michaelmas* thence next ensuing, whose care shall be to inspect and oversee the same, and the children therein, from time to time; and to order and direct all expences, charges, payments, and disbursements concerning the same; and to see and cause all the rules, ordinances, and statutes thereof to be put in due execution.—That all gifts, benevolences, contributions, payments, and sums of money whatsoever, now or hereafter to be made and given to the same Hospital or Workhouse, or the poor children therein, shall from time to time be paid into the

hands of such governors; and a true account thereof, and of all expences, charges, payments and disbursements concerning the same, shall yearly be made and audited on the usual day appointed for auditing the accompts of the mayor and burgesses.—That a book be kept, wherein all gifts and benevolences, that have been or shall hereafter be given to, or bestowed on the said Hospital or Workhouse, or the poor children therein, shall be fairly registered, to be kept in the said chapel.—That one other book be kept, wherein the names or times of placing or removing of all masters and poor children of the same Hospital or Workhouse shall be entered and recorded.—That a sufficient chest or box be provided, with two locks, for the reposing and safe keeping therein the *Deeds of Foundation, Endowment*, and other writings, that do or shall belong thereunto, as also the *common seal* of the said Hospital, or Workhouse; one key whereof to remain with the mayor of this burgh for the time being, the other with the senior governor thereof.—That the mayor, aldermen, and common-councilmen; or so many as shall think fit, by appointment of the mayor for the time being, shall four times in every year, or oftener if need require, visit the said hospital or workhouse, for the better encouragement thereof, and discovering abuses that may be committed contrary to these rules and ordinances.” \*

“The first Collection among the inhabitants towards this charitable design, and preparing this chapel, amounted to the sum of 406*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.*—The Corporation also

\* Mackerell, 222-



made an order among themselves, That every Alderman new elected should pay at his admittance 10*l.* and every common-council-man 20 nobles, which, to the year ending at Lady day 1724, amounted to 726*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* The legacies of persons deceased (besides other benefactions) given to the same" [up to the above specified time] amounted to 90*l.* 0*s.* 0*d.*—In all 1222*l.* 14*s.* 10*d.*—They also endowed it with 20*l.* *per annum.*" \*

For some reason, to us unknown, the above order of things did not long continue. In the course of a few years another revolution took place: most, if not all the above regulations were repealed, or laid aside, and the house, by an act of parliament, was consigned to the superintendence and management of the *Guardians of the Poor*. † That act passed in 1701, the 12th. of William III. *For erecting Hospitals and Workhouses in King's Lynn*. It contains, as Mackerell observes, the following clause—"The *Workhouse founded by the mayor and burgesses, called St. James's Workhouse, and all lands, tenements, rents, revenues, goods, and chattels, belonging to the same, are by this act vested and settled in the guardians of the poor, and their successors.*" ‡ We are further told, that by another clause in this act, it was to continue in force *only so long as the rates did not exceed what had been paid towards the*

\* Ib. 178.

† By the above Act, if we are not mistaken, or about the time when it took place, there was also appropriated, as a further addition to the revenue and maintenance of the said house, *four pence per chaldron on all coals imported here by strangers; which is said to amount yearly, one year with another, to 200*l.* and upwards.* [Mackerell, 179.]

‡ Mackerell, 178.

*maintenance of the poor, for any one of the then three last years.* ‡ That excess, no doubt, took place pretty soon, though we have not learnt the exact year when it so happened: and yet the guardians, it seems, long after, and even till very lately, acted under that same obsolete law; a conduct which may be thought not altogether justifiable or defensible. But as the proverb says, that “half a loaf is better than no bread,” so they might judge that an obsolete law was better than no law. However that was, one would think that they must cease to be guardians, when the law that constituted them such lost its authority, or ceased to be in force,

From the period when the superintendence and management of St. James’s Hospital were committed to the guardians, it appears to have become the proper poor house of St. Margaret’s parish, and general workhouse of the town.—Of the exact state and regular variations of the poor rates in Lynn during the first sixty years, and more, after the above act had passed, we have but little knowledge; but *for the last forty years* our information is much more extensive and authentic. During this period our poor-rates, or what we have raised for the support of the poor, have increased *tenfold*, and the number of paupers *four or five fold*.—In 1770 these rates amounted to only 976*l.*—In 1796 they amounted to 7713*l.*—and in 1809 to about, or near 9000*l.* and the whole expenditure, up to the end of January in the present year, (1810.) to the enormous sum of 10,243*l.* 10*s.* 3*d.*—for, after the manner of our superiors, who sit above

‡ Grisenthwaite’s Remarks, p. 11.

at the helm, we manage and contrive that our outgoings should exceed our income.—The following statements of our out-door expenditure in two different years, (the first and the last of the above period,) extracted from Mr. Grisenthwaite's Remarks, p. 19 and 20, may throw some further light upon this subject.

Abstract of *Out-door Expenditure* in 1770, as published by order of the Court of Guardians.

No. of families in each ward.	Wards.	No. of persons.	Cash paid to each ward weekly.		
			<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
30.	1. North End Ward . .	78 . . .	2.	14.	0.
6.	2. Kettlewell ditto . . . .	9 . . .	0.	7.	6.
5.	3. Trinity Hall ditto . .	16 . . .	0.	9.	6.
5.	4. Jews' Lane ditto . .	10 . . .	0.	11.	6.
13.	5. Paradise ditto . . . .	34 . . .	1.	6.	0.
26.	6. Sedgeford Lane ditto .	41 . . .	1.	18.	6.
19.	7. Stonegate ditto . . .	34 . . .	1.	13.	0.
20.	8. Chequer ditto . . . .	41 . . .	1.	6.	6.
8.	9. New Conduit ditto .	17 . . .	0.	11.	6.
	In St. James's Workhouse . . . .		0.	2.	6.
<hr/> 131. Total as establishment account, 280.			<hr/> 10. 19. 6.*		

\* The reader will perceive that this is not perfectly correct; but so it stands in Mr. Grisenthwaite's Pamphlet. The incorrectness, however, is trivial, and cannot affect the main subject. It may be supposed to lie among the separate articles, rather than in the casting up; but it cannot be rectified without a sight of the original account.



Abstract of Out-door Expenditure in 1809, as published by order of the Court (or corporation) of Guardians.

No. of families in each ward,	Wards.	No. of persons.	Cash paid to each ward weekly.		
			<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
85. . .	North End Ward .	172. . . .	9.	19.	9.
44. . .	Kettlewell ditto . .	78. . . .	5.	16.	0
58. . .	Paradise ditto . . .	141. . . .	8.	18.	6.
36. . .	Jews' Lane ditto . .	99. . . .	5.	10.	6.
44. . .	New Conduit ditto .	91. . . .	6.	12.	0.
58. . .	Chequer ditto . . .	120. . . .	9.	2.	6.
33. . .	Trinity Hall ditto .	64. . . .	5.	2.	6.
76. . .	Sedgeford Lane ditto	158. . .	10.	9.	6.
80. . .	Stonegate ditto . .	150. . .	12.	0.	0.
<hr/>					
514.	Weekly Allowance	1050. . .	75.	11.	3.
	Sick poor . . . . .	60. . . .	8.	17.	0.
	Illegitimate . . . . .	39. . . .	3.	13.	9.
<hr/>					
	<i>Total.</i>	1149.	88.	1.	9.*

The difference between the latter and the former of the above Statements, in so short a period, comprehending only a part of the present prosperous reign, and what some seem to deem the most blessed and glorious part of it, must be exceedingly remarkable and wonder-

\* This statement also is somewhat inaccurate, but not so as to affect the main subject. The sum total may be presumed to be strictly correct, whatever slight errors may have crept among the separate articles, which might be easily rectified by a sight of the original documents.

ful. In 1770 the rates of the town were only 4s. in the pound on the rent, raising an annual revenue of 976*l*; of which 579*l*. were appropriated for the use of the out door poor, leaving only 397*l*. for the maintenance of the Workhouse and all other contingent expences. Thus the total expenditure of the House was then only 397*l*; now it is 5496*l*. 3*s*. 5*d*. —Then the total annual expenditure for both the in-door and out-door poor was only 976*l*; now it is above 10,000*l*. \* Of course, the charge for the maintenance of the poor is now become a very serious matter, and even a heavy and grievous burden to many of the inhabitants.

Our poor rates have arrived at their present unexampled height under the *new* heaven-born *poor-law*, which was to be the prolific parent of so many inestimable blessings to the town; not one of which, alas! has yet been, or is ever likely to be realized. This memorable law, and its worthy twin-sister, the *paving law*, have been already productive of incalculable mischief. The vast additional burden which they have brought upon the inhabitants has lessened the value of houses 15 or 20 per cent, and multiplied the number of untenanted dwellings to five or six score, at least. ‡ Nor is it possible at present to calculate how far the evil will or may extend.

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\* See Grisenthwaite's Remarks, p. 21, and the last Account of Receipts and Disbursements published by the Corporation of Guardians,

‡ They were between five and six score last year, and are supposed to be more now. This is said to have already occasioned to our Lynn house-owners a loss of above 1000*l*. a year: of course, they have no great reason to exult in the goodness of the times, or to boast of the salutary or beneficial effects of the new poor and paving laws.

For such a town as this to contain a large and increasing number of empty houses must certainly have a very dark and unpropitious appearance, and is utterly repugnant to every idea of our being at present in a flourishing or prosperous condition. \*

When it was made to appear that the poor rates of Lynn amounted to nearly, if not quite, as much as those of *Hull* and *Exeter*, places three times its population, it was impossible to avoid suspecting the existence of some sad mismanagement, if not also of most foul and criminal misdoings. The same suspicion was not likely to be lessened, but rather to issue in full conviction, when it was discovered, that the maintenance of each pauper in this workhouse, or hospital, costs even more than that of each pensioner in *Greenwich Hospital*, †

\* Lynn, unquestionably, owes much of its present declension to the new *poor* and *paving* laws; which have so greatly added to those burdens which were already become almost unbearable: they therefore ought not to have been brought forward at such a time; especially, as they were disapproved by a large proportion of the inhabitants. Though their bad effects are visible to the most superficial observer, yet that avails nothing: we are too self-sufficient to be taught by experience, or to let the remembrance of past errors correct our future conduct. The present sudden advance, or augmentation of the *water-rent*, at the rate of fifty per cent, may serve to illustrate this. Under our present circumstances, this measure must appear exceedingly inconsiderate, unfeeling, and illtimed. It would not have been disreputable in the managers of this concern to pay the inhabitants the compliment of explaining to them the reason of this measure: but, perhaps, they might think that the inhabitants had no right to know the reason, nor yet the reasonableness of their exactions. Private householders are to be charged higher than shopkeepers: this also seems to want explanation. Were we possessed of the whole secret, it would probably appear that abuses exist in the management of our water-works not very dissimilar to those of our work-house.

† Grisenthwaite's Remarks, page 40.



and twice or thrice as much as that of each pauper in some, if not all, of the most noted and respectable work-houses, or poorhouses in the kingdom. That the report of these circumstances, with the increasing pressure of the rates, should excite a spirit of mistrust, inquiry, and investigation in the town, was no more than what might naturally be expected. It accordingly did so happen: and the result proved that the previous suspicions were not groundless.

In the course of the investigation, *Butcher's Meat* appeared to be here consumed in such unusual quantities † as are utterly irreconcilable with any and every idea of economy and good management: and in the article of *Cheese* the consumption appeared to be still more palpably disproportionate, unexampled, and excessive; so as to set the wisdom and competency of our managers in a very unfavourable and unseemly point of view.—This the reader will easily perceive, when he is told, that it costs in this house, for cheese alone, between 4 and 5*l.* a week, or that there is consumed here weekly no less than 1 Cwt. of that article. That this is out of all proportion to what is usual in other Poor-houses, will appear from the following statement, extracted from Mr. Grisenthwaite late publication. \*

At the *Norwich* Poor-houses, among 1343 persons, during one of the late years of scarcity, the annual expence for *cheese* was 135*l.* 2*s.* 5*d.*—At *Shrewsbury*,

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† *Sixty Stone* a week, or more, as it is positively reported.

\* Grisenthwaite's Remarks, p. 41.

among 274 persons, (in 1801, if we are not mistaken,) the annual expence for the same article was 56*l.* 2*s.* 4*d.* —At *Hull*, in 1808, (number of persons not mentioned, but doubtless, not fewer than those in our Poor-house,) the annual expence for the said article was 29*l.* 16*s.* — At *Lynn*, the same year, among 200 persons, for that article, 226*l.* 8*s.*—At the same town, among about the same number of persons, for the last year, (1809,) the annual expence for that very article amounted to the still more enormous sum of 259*l.* 15*s.* 11*d.* †—If we go on at this rate, we shall soon have 3 or 400*l.* a year to pay *for cheese only*, for the use of our Workhouse; a sum equal to what the whole of that establishment cost *forty years ago*. ‡

The statement here following will shew the respective and total amount of the expence of the other articles consumed in this house within the last year, with the proportion they bore to the single article above specified. —The *Butter* used in this house for the whole year cost 30*l.* 11*s.* 1*d.*—The *Milk* 33*l.* 14*s.* 2*d.*—*Potatoes* 37*l.* 2*s.*—*Oatmeal* and *Peas* 56*l.* 6*s.* [Total 157*l.* 13*s.* 3*d.*] That the sum total of the expence for the above four, or rather *five* articles, should fall short above 100*l.* of what it cost for cheese only, must, surely be very strange: and yet it appears not to be more strange than true. The whole year's expence for *Grocery* was 158*l.* 1*s.* 7*d.* —And for *Beer*, 157*l.* 7*s.*—Here also it may be thought not a little remarkable, that the *Grocery* and even the

† Account of Receipts and Disbursements of 1809, published by the Corporation of Guardians.

‡ G.'s Remarks, p. 33.

*Beverage* used here should so much fall short of the *Cheese* as each of them not to amount to very much above half the expence of that article. Of the two most important articles, *Flour* and *Meat*, (the only two which exceeded the expence of *cheese*!) the former, including *Bread*, cost 1001*l.* 10*s.* 9*d.* \* —and the latter, (*Meat*,) cost 1110*l.*—*Coals* cost 134*l.* 5*s.* 10.—*Turf* 5*l.* 3*s.*—*Oil* 8*l.* 4*s.*—The total expenditure of the house for the whole year, including sundry other articles, with repairs, &c. 3496*l.* 3*s.* 5*d.*,—† and with the disbursements to the out-door pensioners, the entire expenditure, up to the end of last January, as was before observed, appeared to amount to 10,243*l.* 10*s.* 3*d.* : § an enormous sum, surely, for a town that does not contain 11,000 inhabitants, or any manufacture, or even any trade now, of much consequence, except the *coal trade*. Under these circumstances, such a rapid and vast increase of poor, and of the poor rates, must amount to an irrefragable proof, that we are now in a state of actual and fast declension, whatever some people may insinuate, or pretend to the contrary. But the more evident this declension is, the more incumbent it must be on those who have the management of our affairs to observe the utmost economy, and spare as much as possible the industrious and lower orders of the community, who can

\* One would hardly have expected that the cost of cheese alone, in a poor-house, would have been more than one fourth of that of both *bread* and *flour*.

† Account of Receipts and Disbursements, as before.

§ If any thing has been mistated here, the writer will thank any one that will apprize him of it; and he will take care to have it rectified.



so ill bear the burden of additional charges. Whether they have hitherto ever thought of this, or not, it seems to be now high time that it should occupy its full share of their attention. ‡

It has also been thought, or rather suspected, that our distributors of parochial relief do not always distribute or administer that relief with judgment and discrimination, or even with a scrupulous or due regard to justice and impartiality: and such statements as the following might be supposed to afford some colour or countenance to such suspicions—"Weekly allowances—To a man and wife and 5 children, 2s. 6d: To a young woman, aged 24, and one child 2s.—To a man and wife near 70 years of age, 1s: To a single woman, aged 19, 2s. 6d.—To a widow, aged 76, 2s: To a single woman, aged 31, 2s. 6d.—To a widow, aged 78, 2s. To a single woman, aged 22, 1s. 6d.—To an aged woman, 102 years old, 2s. 6d: To a widow. aged 48, 3s. 6d.—To a widow, aged 38, with 3 children, 3s: To a single woman, aged 36, 2s. 6d."\* Such a Statement, which may be taken as a sample, or specimen of our out-door dis-

‡ Let no one suppose, from what has been above said or suggested, that the present writer would wish our poor to be neglected, or treated unfeelingly, Nothing on earth can be further from his thoughts. Let them, by all means, be sufficiently attended to, and duly provided for: but he sees no reason why they should live better than the poor in all other English work-houses, or even better than what many of those that contribute towards their support can afford to do; which yet seems to be actually the case at Lynn, of late years. Much tender attention, undoubtedly, is due, not only to those of the poor who are entitled to parochial relief, but also to those of them on whom a contribution beyond their power is levied towards that relief. Of these there is said to be now among us no small number.

\* Grisenthwaite's Remarks p. 24,

tributions, has something like partiality, or inconsiderateness, marked on its very forehead.—“Kisses,” according to the old adage, “go by favour;” and so, it is to be feared, do our out-door parochial allowances, in too many instances. But upon this topic we will not now enlarge, as we may have occasion hereafter to resume the subject, in the latter part of the work. †

At this time (July 1810) a revolution, or new arrangement is said to be actually taking place among our indoor-pensioners, or in the management of St. James’s Hospital, from which very important benefits are expected soon to result: and it is much to be wished that the event may correspond with the present expectations. The household expences have been already, it seems much reduced, ‡ without the least detriment to the poor inmates: and we hear, that the plan is to be followed up with the strictest attention to sound and rigid economy. The present state of the town certainly requires it, and those who have come forward on this occasion seem to be very much in earnest; but it remains to be seen how far our present hopes and expectations will be realized, or whether, after all, we are not destined to be, in this case, as we have been in many others, the miserable victims of delusion and disappointment. \*

† Its connection with the history of St. James’s Chapel and Hospital was the sole reason of its being adverted to, or brought forward in this part of the work.

‡ In the article of *Meat*, for instance, the reduction is said to be from 60 stone, or more, to less than 30.

\* The expectation of the adoption of a thorough economical system, for our Workhouse, has considerably lowered, with some people, since the recent appointment of a new collector of poor rates; when a per-

With very little propriety, especially of late years; has our St. James's Hospital been called a *Work-house*: it might full as well, and even better, have been called a *play-house*; for it is certain that there is more *play* than *work* going on there. Among its 200 pensioners,

son was appointed with a salary of 130*l.* a year, although another candidate, of equally unexceptionable character offered, as it is said, to execute the office for 50*l.* less. This, indeed, does not seem to be a good omen; yet we hope it does not augur, or absolutely indicate that things will still go on after the old sort, so as to admit of such vile and infamous proceedings as those of the *flour-merchants*, mentioned by Mr. Grisenthwaite, or that the expenditure of the next and succeeding years will equal, or nearly equal, that of the last and preceding ones.---No longer, it is to be hoped, are we to hear of "every thing for the use of the House being procured of whom and in such quantities as the governor and master think proper, at the full current market prices—or, that groceries are taken, in small quantities, at the common retail rates—or, that clothing provided for the house costs upwards of 30 per Cent. more than it might fairly be afforded at—or, that our female paupers, on holidays, are to be seen associated, in the vilest ale-houses, with the very dregs of society, manifesting by their lewdness of expression, immodest demeanour, and depraved sentiment, an entire dereliction of every virtuous principle." This last circumstance must have actually reduced our poor-house to a *wh—house*! a character which, surely it ought no longer to retain; otherwise a great part of our enormous poor rates will be most infamously misapplied.—It is presumed it will also be very desirable that our new collector should not tenaciously imitate every part of the conduct of his predecessor; and especially that of harassing the poorer householders, for default of prompt or speedy payment, by indiscriminately issuing *summonses*, at the rate of 2*s.* 4*d.* a piece, and by three and four score at a time. Such a process must bear very hard upon those luckless people, whose poverty or inability constitutes perhaps, the whole of their delinquency. To exact, therefore, an additional 2*s.* 4*d.* from each of them, must have been, to say the least of it, an unchristian and inhuman deed.—N. B. The Collector above mentioned, with a salary of 130*l.* a year, is a new officer, as is also the Registrar, with a salary of 50*l.* a year. These twin-brothers are the legitimate offspring of the new poor act. To the Registrar is supposed to belong, to *chronicle small beer*, &c. and write summonses: if so, as the defaulters are charged 2*s.* 4*d.* for each summons, are they not, in fact, paid for twice over?



one half, at least, may be supposed capable of doing some, and even a great deal of work: and yet all their earnings during all the last year amounted to no more than 170*l.* 1*s.* 5*d.* which was at the rate of *little more than a penny a day*. The work, therefore, done by the numerous residents in this house is scarcely worth mentioning, except for the purpose of exhibiting the palpable neglect and mismanagement of the conductors, and their utter incompetency for the charge which they have undertaken. As things have stood hitherto, this house has been little better than a nest of sloth, or an asylum for idleness; where young and strong paupers are so treated as if it were actually wished and intended to unfit them, as much as possible, for any future use or employment in society, or as if their admission here had been meant for their ruin, and not for their relief and benefit — Care, certainly, ought to be taken, that the children, and youth, and hale people, in our poor-houses, be inured to habits of industry, as well as provided with food and raiment; otherwise, the succour afforded will be most materially defective.

The foregoing narration, it is presumed, will enable the reader to form a pretty accurate and adequate idea, of the history of this notable house, from its first erection, or foundation, in the reign of king Stephen, or that of his successor, to the present time. At first, as has been shewn, it was a chapel, or place of worship, of no small consideration in the town, being little inferior to St. Nicholas' chapel, or even St. Margaret's

church, and continued to be so till the reformation, when it was unaccountably desecrated, and most of it pulled down. After which, it was appropriated successively to different uses, till it became the poor-house of St. Margaret's parish, and the general work-house of the town, with the annexation, of late years, of extensive new buildings. This is its state at present: but how long it may so continue, it is impossible to say, as we can see but little into futurity. How far the recent change and expected reform will realize or disappoint our hopes, must be left at present among the mysteries. Time is the only revealer of such secrets. We will now take our leave of St. James's Chapel and Hospital, and proceed to other matters, somewhat less connected with the affairs of the present generation.

## CHAP. VII.



Brief biographical notices of the most remarkable or distinguished personages that appeared among the inhabitants of Lynn, in the intervening period between the Conquest and the Reformation.

During the period now under consideration, it is not known that many eminently distinguished, or very memorable characters appeared among the inhabitants of this town, full as it was, in the mean time, of ecclesiastics or priests, and monks or friars of different orders, among whom was usually confined all the little knowledge and learning that did then exist in the nation. But though the population of Lynn, during the said period, did not abound in characters of the above description, yet it does not appear to have been altogether destitute of them. The names of several have been preserved, who seem to have made in their day no mean figure among their most enlightened contemporaries; of whom the following were, perhaps, the most estimable and worthy of remembrance.



I. NICHOLAS DE LENNA, or *Nicholas of Lynn*. He was a native of this town, and flourished in the reign of Edward III. He was educated at Oxford, where his literary proficiency may be supposed to have been very considerable, as he afterwards appeared to exceed most of his fellows, especially in some rare studies and distinguishing departments. To him is supposed chiefly to apply that observation of *Voltaire*, in his *Essay on Universal History*, (vol. 3. pp. 182, 183.) "That the first [in Europe] who certainly made use of the *compass* were the English, in the reign of Edward III."

\* *Hackluyt*, in his *Voyages*, makes particular and honorable mention of him, observing, that Nicholas de Lenna, an excellent musician, mathematician, and astrologer, bred at Oxford, after having applied his studies chiefly to astronomy, by the help of his *Astrolabe*, ‡ made six voyages to the North seas, of which he published an account, in a book entitled "*Inventio Fortu-*

\* Were it, indeed, ascertainable, that it was Nicholas who taught England and Europe the use of the Compass, Lynn would have great reason to be proud of him. But the fact is doubtful, if not more than doubtful, as the same honour has been confidently ascribed to *Flavio Gioia*, a celebrated mathematician of Amalfi, in Naples, who flourished about 1300, which was somewhat earlier than the other, and who marked the *north-point* in the Compass by a *flower de lis*, in compliment to the then Neapolitan royal family, which was a branch of that of France. Still our townsman might have a share, and that perhaps not small, if not in the discovery itself, yet, at least, in its improvement, or the application of it to the purposes of navigation. The *Chinese* are said to have been acquainted with magnetism and the use of the compass long before all other nations.

‡ The *Astrolabe* was an instrument formerly in much request, and still very well spoken of. There were different sorts of instruments that bore that name. The above was one of those called *sea-astrolabes*, a description of which may be seen in the works of *Chaucer*, and also in the *Cyclopædias*.

*nata (aliter Fortunæ,) qui liber incipit a gradu 54 usq; ad polum.*’ In the first (which seems to have taken place as early as 1330) he sailed from Lynn to Iceland, with company, whom he left on the sea-coast, while he himself travelled up into the island in search of discoveries. He presented his charts of the northern seas, at his return, (from his last voyage, we may suppose) to Edward III, in 1360; and they were afterwards made use of in the reign of Henry VI, and probably much later. He died in 1369, and was buried at Lynn. We are told that he was much esteemed by his celebrated contemporary *Chaucer*, who styled him ‘Frere Nicholas Linn, a reverend clerke.’

Like the great *Roger Bacon*, who lived about half a century before him, Nicholas belonged to the religious order of *Grey Friars*, or Franciscans, otherwise called Cordeliers, and minor brethren. † One is apt to forget or overlook, in some measure, the extravagances of the order, in the contemplation of its being capable of producing, and that it actually did produce such men as these. As Nicholas is supposed to have spent most part of his time at Lynn, among the brethren of his order, it may very naturally and reasonably be concluded, or supposed, that the *Grey Friars’ tower*, which is still standing, was often used by him, as an *observatory*, in the course of his astro-

† *Bale*, however, classes him among the *Carmelites*; but it seems to be generally agreed that he was mistaken, and that Nicholas certainly belonged to the Franciscans, as was said above. Mackerell imputes *Bale’s* placing him among the *Carmelites* to his partiality to them, having himself been of that fraternity.

nomical studies here; which may suggest no despicable reason for preserving that ancient ruin from the ravages of time, and keeping it up as long as possible. The repair which it lately underwent must be creditable to the feelings of those by whom it was promoted. It may seem somewhat odd and remarkable that it has stood so long, and still exists, the last and only remain of our numerous monasteries and conventual towers; (though, perhaps, from the slightness of its structure, the most unlikely of any of them to survive;) as if time, or providence had favoured its preservation, by way of approval of the useful purposes to which it had been once appropriated, or in honour of the memory of him who so laudably occupied it, and was so eminent a benefactor to his country. Much stress, however, is not meant to be laid on these ideas: yet we cannot help thinking that this supposed, or presumed and probable observatory of our ancient astronomer and navigator is entitled to some real and lasting respect from the enlightened part of our population.

It has been already observed that our worthy and respectable townsman, the subject of this brief memoir, died in 1369, and was buried here, [in the church, or dormitory of the Grey Friars, in all probability;] but at what age, does not appear: yet if his first voyage took place in 1330, as it is said, he must have lived to be pretty far advanced in years; it being not probable that he was less than thirty when he set out on that voyage. Between the first and sixth, or last of his voyages there seem to have been nearly if not



quite thirty years. They were all apparently voyages of discovery and experiment, and for improvement in the art and knowledge of navigation, and proved, no doubt, of no small advantage and benefit to his countrymen. It is much to be wished that a particular account of them had been preserved, which could not fail of being very interesting; but as such an account is not known to exist, our wishing for it must be all vain and useless. Any records which our worthy voyager might leave behind him have probably perished long ago; but we have from other sources sufficient proofs that he must have been in his day an extraordinary man, greatly distinguished as a mathematician and astronomer, and especially as a navigator. He and the person whose name next follows may pretty safely be deemed the two most eminent characters that appeared among our townsmen, during the long period of which we are now treating, or, perhaps, during any other period.

2. WILLIAM SAWTRE, or *Salter*, otherwise *Sawtry*, *Chawtre*y and *Chatris*, and commonly called *Sir William Sawtre*, &c. it being usual in those days, and long after, to prefix that title to the names of a certain description of ecclesiastics. He is rendered peculiarly memorable as the English *proto-martyr*; it being generally agreed that he was the first Englishman that was burnt for his religion. We have no authority to say of *Sautre*, as we did of *Nicholas*, that he was born here. The place of his birth, as far as we know, has been no where mentioned. It appears that he took up his residence and settled here, as parish priest of St, Margaret's, in the

time of bishop *Spencer*, of fighting, crusading, and persecuting memory; and that he was afterwards suspected and found to be a *Lollard* or *Wickliffite*, \* which meant pretty much the same with what we call being a *protestant*, but was then deemed, by the rulers, in church and state, a very grievous offence, and even a most shocking, pestilent, damnable, and insufferable heresy. The defection of *Sawtre*, from the established or national faith, roused his ecclesiastical superiors, and he was cited to appear before his haughty and furious diocesan, at his palace of south Helingham; which accordingly he did, on the last day of April, and the first of May 1399. In the meantime he appears to have undergone a long and strict examination, in the chapel belonging to the said episcopal palace, before the bishop, the archdeacon of Norwich, and divers others, consisting of doctors, divines, and notaries. It also appears that he was then so far from being ashamed of the opinions he had espoused, or intimidated by the danger to which they might expose him, that he did not at all scruple or hesitate to avow and defend them. This we may be sure, did not please and conciliate his

\* Which may probably indicate, that he had been educated at *Oxford*, as that university was the great nest, or fountain-head of Lollardism, which seems not to have been much, if at all countenanced at Cambridge.—Abp. Arundel with his commissioners visited Cambridge in 1401, not long, it seems, after the trial and burning of *Sautre*...One, and perhaps the chief object of their visit was, to enquire, Whether there were among its members “any suspected of Lollardism, or any other heretical pravity.” One solitary Lollard was found out, whose name was *Peter Harford*, who was ordered to abjure Wickliff’s opinions in full congregation. (See Mo. Mag. for Oct. 1803, p. 225.)

examiners, or promote and facilitate his acquittal and liberation.

We are not particularly informed how he was disposed of immediately after this examination: but it seems pretty certain, that he then became a close prisoner in some place of confinement within the precincts of the said episcopal palace. A prison, for reputed heretics and other delinquents, was formerly considered among the necessary appendages to a prelatical mansion or residence: and it cannot be supposed, considering the character of bishop Spencer, but that a very complete one was then to be found at South Helingham. In a complete episcopal prison there was usually, it seems, a cell, called *Little-Ease*; which was a small hole, so constructed, that the person there immured could neither stand upright, lie straight, sit comfortably, or enjoy any degree of ease: in short, it was designed as a place of torment, where the sufferer was to be continually tortured, and deprived, as much as possible, of every thing that could render his situation in any degree tolerable or supportable. This diabolically ingenious contrivance could scarcely fail of answering the purpose of its inventors, as it seems to have been most admirably adapted for taming, subduing, and breaking the spirits of reputed heretics and religious free thinkers: few of whom, it is presumed, could stand such an ordeal, or terrible test, for any length of time. The romish hierarchy must have been tremendously formidable, when its prelates had such prisons in their own houses,



and were empowered to confine there any that dissented from the church, or objected to its tenets and observances. \*

That there was such a place of incarceration and torture then attached to the episcopal palace of South

\* Let it not be supposed that the vile prison holes, or places of torment, above spoken of and described, were used *only* by the votaries of popery, or the roman catholics. Even the member of prelates of the protestant church of England appear also to have made use of them before now; and that, too, at what some seem to deem the era of the utmost evangelical purity of that church--the reign of good queen Bess, as she has been often called. As to our pretended orthodox and evangelical sectaries, if they have not followed the above example *literally*, yet have they made, and still make no scruple of doing it, as we may say, *metaphorically or figuratively*, at least.—When any one is pronounced by their petty popes, prelates, priests, exorcists, or consistories, to be possessed with the demon of heterodoxy or heresy, he is immediately reviled, defamed, proscribed, and outlawed, at it were, by proclamation; or pilloried and gibbeted, in their periodical and other publications—in other words, they do all they can to set every body against him, and render him odious in the sight of all men, as one who has forfeited the esteem of his fellow citizens, and is no longer worthy of enjoying the common rights and comforts of society.—In short, they appear to use all their efforts and energies to have him effectually secured in a *Little Ease*, of a most painful and dismal sort.—If our protestant, orthodox, and evangelical sects and parties do thus, who can wonder at the cruelties ascribed to the papists in former times? Instead of inveighing against the intolerant, persecuting, and antichristian spirit of popery, as these very people often do, they ought, surely, to consider how little that spirit differs from their own. While they inveigh or declaim against the injustice and cruelty of imprisoning, banishing, hanging, or burning people for their religion, and yet, at the same time, are in the constant practice of traducing, reviling, defaming, exhibiting as evil-doers, and treating in the most unkind and injurious manner, those whom they are pleased to brand with the name of *heretics*, or who differ from them, they discover the self same spirit with the very worst of persecutors, and may be compared to the ancient sect called *Circoncelliones*, who would not use the sword, because Christ had forbidden it to *Peter*, but armed themselves with *Clubs*, which they called *the clubs of Israel*, with which they could break all the bones in a man's skin.—See Jones' Mem. of bishop Horne, 275.

Helingham, seems highly probable; and if there were, there can be no doubt but that Sawtre was there confined from the first to the nineteenth day of the month last mentioned.—That he underwent some very severe treatment, in the meantime, seems morally certain, as the remarkable change in his conduct, at the close of that interval, cannot be reasonably or well accounted for on any other ground or supposition. \* On the *first* of May he resolutely avowed and defended the obnoxious opinions imputed to him, but on the *nineteenth* of the same month, the next time he was brought before his judges, he appeared ready to relinquish them all, and pronounce his recantation. There is no reason to think that his opinions had now undergone any change, or that he had become really convinced of their falsity or untenableness; for he appeared, almost immediately after, to be as fully persuaded as ever of their truth and importance. It was evidently the state of his mind that had experienced a change: his fears had got the better of his firmness, and he no longer possessed that fortitude and boldness which he had at first displayed. Torturing severities have often made people deny their principles, and deny, or confess, any thing that their tormentors required. On this ground (and on no other that we know of) can we account for Sawtre's change and subsequent recantation.

It was determined, by the bishop and his coadjutors, that Sawtre should publicly pronounce his recantation at

\* The act *De Hæretico Comburendo*, did not take place till some time after; so that its terrors cannot be supposed to have frightened him to recantation.—We can think of nothing so likely to have produced that effect as some intollerably severe private sufferings which he had undergone during the above mentioned interval.

different places—in order, perhaps, the more effectually to expose and humble him, and so prevent his ever daring again to broach his recanted tenets in these parts. They probably suspected his sincerity, and were resolved to render their triumph over him as complete as possible.—The obnoxious things, or enormities laid to his charge were chiefly and substantially comprised under the following heads—That the Cross on which Christ suffered was not a fit object of worship—That it was more reasonable to worship a temporal prince than that wooden cross—That the worship of angels is unlawful, even more so than the worship of holy or truly good men—That going on pilgrimage is useless, and that vows for that purpose are not binding, and that the money so expended had better be bestowed in alms to the poor—That priests are more bound to preach the word of God than to say their mattins, or observe the canonical hours—and that, after the sacramental words are pronounced, the bread remaineth the same as before, and so does not cease to be bread, or undergo a transubstantiation.—It was a sad time when people held these opinions at the risk of their lives!

On the first two days, as has been already observed, Sawtre openly avowed the said articles, and boldly defended them; but at his next appearance, after eighteen days of close confinement and severe sufferings, as we may reasonably presume, he seemed quite an altered man, ready to retract all he had before affirmed and maintained; which may be easily accounted for on the ground before suggested. How many times, or at how



many places the bishop now required and obliged him to publish, or pronounce his recantation, it is not very easy to discover. We find it to have been done at South Helingham, and we are assured that it was also done in the parish churches of *Lynn* and *Tincey*, and in other places.—*Fox* has preserved a curious document relating to this affair, being the bishop's account of the whole process, drawn up by order of archbishop Arundel, and transmitted to him, when Sawtre was taken up the last time, and tried before him and his clergy, assembled in convocation, at the Chapter House of St. Paul's, in February, 1400, as they reckoned, but 1401, according to our reckoning.—That account, or document is as follows—

“*Memorandum*, That upon the last day of Aprill, in the yeere of our Lord 1399, in the 7. indiction, and 10 yeere of the papacie of pope Boniface the 2. in a certain chamber within the manor-house of the said bishop of Norwich at South Helingham (where the register of the said bishop is kept) before the 9. houre, in a certain chapell within the said manor situate, and the first day of May then next and immediately insuing, in the foresaid chamber Sir W. Chawtris, parish priest of the church of S. Margaret in the towne of Lin, appeared before the bishop of Norwich, in the presence of John de Derlington, archdeacon of Norwich, doctor of the decrees, frier Walter Disse, and John Rickinghall, professors in divinity, William Carlton, doctor of both lawes, and William Friseby, with Hugh Bridham, publike notaries, and there publikely affirmed and held

the conclusions, as before is specified.—All and singular the premisses the forsaid William affirmeth upon mature deliberation. And afterwards, to wit, the 19. day of May in the yeere, indiction, and papacie afore-said, in the chappell within the manor-house of the said Henry bishop of Norwich, situate at South Helingham, the foresaid Sir William revoked and renounced all and singular the foresaid his conclusions; abjuring and correcting all such heresies and errors, taking his oath upon a book before the said Henry, the bishop of Norwich, that from that time forward he would never preach, affirm, nor hold privily nor apertly, the foresaid conclusions; and that he would pronounce, according to the appointment of the said bishop, the foresaid conclusions to be erroneous and heresies, in the parish churches of Lin and Tilney, and in other places at the assignment of the said bishop; and further sware, that he would stand to the ordinance of the said bishop touching the premisses, in the presence of the discreet and worshipfull men afore-recited, with divers other moe.—As concerning the first conclusion, that he said he would not worship the cross &c. he confessed himself to have erred, and that the article was erroneous, and submitted himselfe. And as touching the second article, that he said, he would rather worship a king, &c. he confessed himself to have erred, and the article to be erroneous, and submitted himselfe, and soforth of all the rest.—Then next after this, upon the 25. day of May, in the yeere of our Lord afore-said, in the *Church yard of the Chappell of St. James*, within the towne of Lin, the foresaid William, in the presence of the foresaid bishop

and clergy, and the people of the said towne of Lin standing round about, publikely declared in the English tongue, the foresaid conclusions to be erroneous and heresies, as was contained in a certain scrole. \* And after this, the 26. day of May, in the yeere above said in the *Church of the Hospital of S. John's*, in the towne of Lin, the said Sir William, before the said bishop sitting as judge, sware and took his oath upon the holy Evangelists, that he would never after that time preach

\* That *scrole* related, it seems, to the *recantation*, of which, according to Fox, the following was the tenor or substance—"Imprimis, touching the first and second, [articles] where I said that I would adore rather a temporall prince, and the lively bodie of the saints, than the wooden crosse whereupon the Lord did hang, I do revoke and recant the same, as being therein deceived.—To this I say, that the article is false and erroneous, and by false information I held it; the which I renounce and ask forgiveness thereof, and say, that is a precious relique, and that I shall hold it while I live, and that I sweare here.—I know well that I erred wrongfully by false information: for I wot well, that a deacon or a priest is more bound to say his mattens and houres then to preach; for there he is bounden by right: wherefore I submit me, &c.—Touching that article, I know right well that I erred by false information. Wherefore I ask forgiveness.—As concerning vowes, I say that opinion is false and erroneous, and by false information I held it; for a man is holden to hold his vow, &c.—To the 7. article I say, that I did it by authority of priesthood, wherethrough I knowledge well that I have guilt and trespassed: wherefore I submit me to God and to holy church, and to you father, swearing that I shall never hold it more —To the 8. (article) I say, that I held it by false and wrong information. But now I know well that it is heresis, and that bread, anon as the word of the sacrament is said, is no longer bread materiall, but that it is turned into very Christ's body; and that I sweare here." Two more articles were then retracted by him, and pronounced to be *false and erroneous*, &c. but it does not appear what they were. (see Fox, 1. 674.) —This recantation, throughout, exhibits evident symptoms of a man so overcome by his fears, or his sufferings, as to be ready to say or do any that his unfeeling persecutors should prescribe or dictate to him.—He appeared much more fearless and intrepid afterwards, when he was taken up the last time, tried before the archbishop and convocation, condemned and committed to the flames.



openly and publikely the foresaid conclusions, nor would heare the confessions of any of his subjects of his diocesse of Norwich without the speciall license of the said bishop, &c. In the presence of frier John Smermen, M. John Rickinghall doctor of divinity, W. Carlton doctor of both lawes, and Thomas Bulton officer of the liberty of Lin aforesaid, with divers others." †

Such was the account, or statement of his former process against Sawtre, which bishop Spencer delivered to his metropolitan, Arundel. Not the least hint is here given, how the reputed heretic had been treated, or was disposed of, during the interval between his first and last examination. Had his renunciation of his obnoxious tenets been brought about by mere argument, or rational persuasion, it would, doubtless, have been mentioned by way of triumph, or boasting: but having been the effect of extreme severity or cruel treatment (as was above suggested) it was very natural to pass it over in silence, for it was not capable of yielding any manner of credit to the parties concerned, or give them a plausible pretence to make a merit of it. This silence therefore evidently and strongly corroborates, if it do not also satisfactorily establish, what was before advanced or suggested on this head.

After Sawtre had gone quite through this irksome and humiliating process of recantation, it might be expected that he would not think of tarrying much longer in these parts: he, accordingly, appears to have quitted Lynn

† Fox. A. and M. 1. 673.

shortly after, and obtained the situation of parish-priest, or minister of *St. Osith*, in London. \* This would seem to indicate, that his character was still deemed respectable, and had not suffered so much by the late event as some might expect. He had also, probably, some good and powerful friends, who now interested themselves very warmly and effectually in his behalf. However that was, he really did, as far as we can discover, obtain the said situation without opposition or difficulty. But he soon appeared to be so far from having abandoned his former principles, that he was still, in fact, as much a Lollard and heretic as ever : and his late miscarriage seems to have operated so as both to confirm him in those principles and also to arm him with boldness and courage to maintain them against all gainsayers, and in the face of every future danger or opposition.

Like that of the rest of his party, (the Lollards,) Sawtre's heresy seems to have been of a twofold nature; partly religious, and partly political; which must have rendered him doubly odious to the ruling powers: and as he proved a relapsed, confirmed, and irreclaimable heretic, we need not wonder that he should be made to feel the whole and overwhelming weight of their indignation and vengeance. The affairs of this country were then, as at some subsequent periods, most wretchedly

## 4 D

\* The Londoners were then distinguished for their partiality to the Lollards; which may, in some measure, account for the facility with which Sawtre appears to have obtained the appointment or situation of minister of *St. Osith*.—see *Fox*, 670;

situated. Every thing, both in church and state, might be said to be lamentably in the wrong: and Sawtre appears to have been earnestly desirous of having them thoroughly reformed and rectified. He may therefore be considered, if not as the *Sir William Jones*, \* the *Sir Francis Burdett*, or the *Major Cartwright*, yet, at least, or rather, as the *Christopher Wycill* of that time. Men of that sort, though ever so honest, virtuous, enlightened, or respectable, are always viewed with an evil eye, and deemed to be dangerous characters by the interested and unprincipled agents and abettors of ecclesiastical and political corruption. It is no wonder, therefore, that a most horrible outcry was raised against this man throughout the whole camp and borders of those philistines.

Sawtre had formed an important plan for the benefit of his oppressed country, and intended to lay it immediately before parliament. The design got wind, and the high priests, in particular, with archbishop *Arundel* at their head, were instantly alarmed, as the project, had it succeeded, would have deeply affected them: and in order effectually to frustrate the reformer's object, they so managed, that the affair should not go before parliament, but be referred to the *convocation*, which was then sitting. From that assembly no good could be expected to result. Patriots and reformers were there objects of utter aversion; and any one might see that poor

\* The celebrated *Sir William Jones* is well known to have been one of our most earnest and warm friends and advocates of reform. The memorable *Dr. Johnson* used to call him, *the most enlightened of the sons of men*.



Sawtre had no longer any chance of bringing his project to a successful issue, or even of escaping with his life. He was accordingly brought before that ecclesiastical tribunal, and the result will be seen by the sequel. This was about the middle of February 1401, or 1400, according to their reckoning; for they placed that month near the close of the year, which, with them, ended on the 25th of March.

The story of Sawtre is thus introduced by Fox—"The next yeere after followed a parliament holden at Westminster:" [i. e. in 1400; for he has also, like his predecessors, assigned February to the preceding year:] "in which parliament one William Sautre, a good man and a faithfull priest, inflamed with zeale of true religion, required he might be heard for the commoditie of the whole realme. But the matter being smelt before by the bishops, they obtained that the matter should be referred to the convocation; where the said William Sautre being brought before the bishops and notaries thereunto appointed, the convocation was deferred to the Saturday next ensuing. When Saturday was come, that is to say, the twelfth day of February, Thomas Arundell archbishop of Canterbury, in the presence of his counsell provincially, being assembled in the said chapter-house [i. e. that of St. Paul's] against one Sir William Sautre, otherwise called Chatris chaplaine, personally then and there appearing by the commandment of the afore-said archbishop of Canterbury, objected; that the said Sir William before the bishop of Norwich had once re-

nounced and abjured divers and sundry conclusions hereticall and erroneous ; and that after such abjuration made, he publicly and privily held, taught, and preached th same conclusions, or else such like, disagreeing to the catholic faith, and to the great perill and pernicious example of others. And after this he caused such like conclusions holden and preached, as is said, by the said Sir William without renunciation, then and there to be read unto the said archbishop, by master Robert Hall, chancellor unto the said bishop, in a certain scrolc written, in tenor of words as followeth—"Sir William Chatris, otherwise called Sautre, parish priest of the church of Saint Scithe [Osith] the virgin in London, publikely and privily doth hold these conclusions under written—*Imprimis*, he saith, that he will not worship the crosse on which Christ suffered, but only Christ that suffered upon the crosse.—2. *Item*, That he would sooner worship a temporall king, than the fore-said wooden crosse—3. *Item*, That he would rather worship the bodies of the saints than the very crosse of Christ on which he hung, if it were before him.—4. *Item*, That he would rather worship a man truly contrite, than the crosse of Christ,—5. *Item*, That he is bound rather to worship a man that is predestinate, than an angell of God.—6. *Item*, That if any man would visit the monuments of Peter and Paul, or go on pilgrimage to the Tombe of Saint Thomas, or else any whither else, for the obtaining of any temporall benefit ; he is not bound to keep his vow, but he may distribute the expences of his vow upon the almes of the poore.—7. *Item*, That every priest and deacon is more bound to

preach the word of God, than to say the canonicall houres.—8. *Item*, That after the pronouncing of the sacramentall words of the body of Christ, the bread remaineth of the same nature that it was before, neither doth it cease to be bread.” \*

These articles or charges being publicly read and exhibited, the archbishop then called upon Sawtre to answer to them; but he desired that he might first have a copy of them, and that sufficient time might be allowed him to prepare his answer and defence. A Copy was accordingly delivered to him, and the next Thursday was then fixed upon for him again to appear before his judges. But on that day, owing, it seems, to the archbishop's being then necessarily engaged in the parliament-house, the business was adjourned till the next morning at eight o'clock. The convocation, or rather its upper house, being then assembled, Sawtre appeared again before them, and produced a written defence, and answer to those articles, which were then publicly read by Robert Hall, before mentioned. He no longer thought of retracting, as he had done near two years before, at Lynn and other places. On the contrary, he now openly avowed his principles, and appeared neither afraid nor ashamed to defend them. It is therefore, not to be wondered that the writing, or answer, which he laid before them, and which was now publicly read in their hearing, proved no way satisfactory or conciliating.

After the said Robert Hall had read that paper, or answer, aloud, in the audience of the Convocation, the

\* Fox A. and M. 671, 672.



archbishop, being dissatisfied with the contents, proceeded to question Sawtre on what he deemed the most material points, which chiefly related to the doctrine of transubstantiation. Among his questions were the following— \* “Whether in the Sacrament of the altar, after the pronouncing of the Sacramentall words, remaineth very materiall bread, or not?—Whether in the sacrament after the sacramentall words, rightly pronounced of the priest, the same bread remaineth, which did before the words pronounced, or not?—Whether the same materiall bread before consecration, by the sacramentall words of the priest rightly pronounced, be transubstantiated from the nature of bread into the very body of Christ, or not?” To none of these interrogatories did the prisoner return an orthodox or satisfactory answer. His answers being therefore deemed insufficient, and the day, probably, too far gone to

\* One circumstance, mentioned as having occurred in the course of this examination, seems not a little difficult to account for. Fox says, that Arundel enquired of Sawtre, “Whether he had abjured the foresaid heresies and errors objected against him before the bishop of Norwich, or not; or else had revoked and renounced the said or such like conclusions or articles, or not?” and that the latter answered and affirmed that he had not.” [p. 672.] Also four days after, when the fore-cited process of the bishop of Norwich was read to him before the convocation, and it was urged that he had then abjured, among other errors, the heresy, that in the sacrament of the altar, after the consecration made by the priest, there still remained material bread, “Whereunto the said William, answered, smiling, or in mocking wise, and denying that he knew of the premisses.” [Ib. p. 674.] In all this there is evidently some mystery, which one knows not how to unravel, except on the supposition, that there was some material mistake, or designed misrepresentation in the statement which bishop Spencer sent to the convocation of his process against Sawtre, and of the tenor of the latter’s retractation, which might, in his opinion, justify his said denial.

finish the examination at that time, it was thought proper to adjourn the business till the next day. Of what then occurred Fox gives the following account.

“Then the said archbishop assigned unto the said Sir William time to deliberate, and more fully to make his answer till the next day; and continued this convocation then and there till the morrow. Which morrow, to wit, the 19th day of February, being come, the foresaid archbishop of Canterbury, in the said chapter house of St. Paul in London, before his councell provincially then and there assembled, specially asked and examined the same Sir W. Sautre, there personally present, upon the sacrament of the altar, as before. And the same Sir William again, in like manner as before, answered. After this amongst other things the said bishop demanded of the same William, if the same material bread being upon the altar, after the sacramentall words being of the priest rightly pronounced, is transubstantiated into the very body of Christ, or not? And the said Sir William said, he understood not what he meant. Then the said archbishop demanded, whether that material bread being round and white, prepared and disposed for the sacrament of the body of Christ upon the altar, wanting nothing that is meet and requisite thereunto, by the virtue of the sacramentall words being of the priest rightly pronounced, be altered and changed into the very body of Christ, and ceaseth any more to be material and very bread, or not? Then the said Sir William, deridingly + answering, said he could not tell.”

Then consequently the said archbishop demanded, whether he would stand to the determination of the holy church, or not, which affirmeth that in the sacrament of the altar, after the words of consecration being rightly pronounced of the priest, the same bread, which before in nature was bread, ceaseth any more to be bread? To this interrogation the said Sir William said, that he would stand to the determination of the church, where such determination was not contrary to the will of God. This done, he demanded of him againe, what his judgement was concerning the sacrament of the altar: who said and affirmed, that after the words of consecration, by the priest duly pronounced, there remained very bread, and the same bread which was before the words spoken.”—This examination commenced at eight o’clock in the morning, and lasted about three hours: and as the prisoner would not now retract, or recede from his Lollardism, and receive what was called *Catholic information*, but chose to persist, at all events, in his own way of thinking, the archbishop, as we are told, “by the counsell and assent of his whole covent then and there present, did promulgate and give sentence by the mouth of Robert Hall, against the same Sir William, being personally present, and refusing to revoke his heresies, but constantly defended the same.” \*

† He might well answer *deridingly*, for such interrogations were fit only to excite contempt and derision.

\* See Fox 673, who gives the following as a copy of the said sentence—“*In the Name of God, Amen. We Thomas by the grace of God archbishop of Canterbury, primate of England, and Legate of the See Apostolicall, by the authority of God almighty, and blessed Saint Peter and Paul, and of holy church, and by our own authority, sitting for tribunal or chiefe judge, having God alone before our eyes, by the counsell*



After passing the said sentence, an adjournment took place, till the week after, when the prisoner was again brought before them, two or three different times. On the Wednesday they read to him bishop Spencer's statement of his process against him, near two years before. The archbishop and divers others now reproached him for holding opinions which he had before abjured; as if it were a mighty crime for a man, after having been once so weak as to renounce or abjure the truth, afterwards to repent and embrace it—or, after having once been so overseen as to resign the right of private judgment, ever any more to think of resuming it! As all the stratagems and means they could use proved now too feeble to shake him from his integrity, or induce him to sacrifice his conscience to their unrighteous and infernal pleasure, they resolved he should be forthwith degraded: and a sentence of degradation † was accordingly passed upon him that same day. The execution of this sen-

## 4 E

and consent of the whole clergie, our fellow bretheren and suffragans, assistants to us in this present councell provincially, by this our sentence definitive do pronounce, decree, and declare by these presents, thee William Sautre, otherwise colled Chawtre, parish priest pretended, personally appearing before us, in and upon the crime of heresie, judicially and lawfully convict, as an heretike, and as an heretike be punished."

† See Fox, p. 674. where we find a copy of this second sentence, or sentence of degradation, in the following words... "*In the Name of God, Amen.* Wee Thomas by the grace of God archbishop of Canterbury, Legate of the See Apostolicall, and metropolitan of all England, doe find and declare, that thou William Sautre, otherwise called Chautris, priest, by us with the counsell and assent of all and singular our fellow brethren and whole clergie, by this our sentence definitive declared in writing, hast beene for heresie convict and condemned, and art (being againe fallen into heresie) to be deposed and degraded by these presents."

tence was deferred till the Friday following; and as the archbishop could not then attend, owing to his detention in parliament, it was further deferred till the morrow after. They then proceeded to business in good earnest, and a most curious process it certainly was— They first deprived him of his *priest's order*, next of his *deacon's order*, next of his *subdeacon's order*, then of his *acolyte's order*, then of his *exorcist*, or *holy-water-clerk's order*, then of his *reader's order*, then of his *sexton's order*, and finally, of his *privilege of clergy*: in token of which his tonsure was erased, a layman's cap put on his head, and himself so entirely secularized, or reduced to the state of a lay person, as if he had never been in orders.

All this was certainly absurd enough; \* but as it was also very curious, we shall here give it more circumstan-

\* But its absurdity seems of an opposite cast to that of one our late parliaments, which undertook to establish the popish doctrine of the *indelibility of the priestly, or clerical character*, than which neither the above process, nor even transubstantiation itself, can be more absurd or ridiculous. That such a doctrine should really be recognised, adopted, and established by the British Senate, new in the 19th century, might have occasioned no small astonishment, had not the same august body, within the same period, done so many other things equally strange, marvellous, and disreputable. Should we become inquisitive, and presume to ask, What is this invisible, mysterious, indelible something, called character; the episcopal, priestly, or clerical character? some will tell us, that it is a *spiritual power*, others a *habit or disposition*, others a *spiritual figure*, others a *sensible metaphorical quality*, others a *real relation*, others a *fabric of the mind*: by all which, little more, perhaps, can be made out, or comprehended, than that the advocates or supporters of the doctrine are much at variance about this character. But however they may differ in their ideas and definitions of the character itself, they are, it seems, in perfect agreement as to its indelibility; being all firmly persuaded, that though a bishop, priest, or deacon, turn heretic or schismatic, deist

tially, in the words of the historian so often referred to in these pages—"Upon Saturday, being the 26th. of February, the said archbishop of Canterbury sate in the bishop's seat of the foresaid church of St. Paul, in London, and solemnly apparelled in his pontificall attire, sitting with him as his assistants these reverend fathers and bishops, of London, Lincolne, Hereford, Exeter, *Moncepsis & Roffensis episcopi*," [i. e. the bishops of St. Davids and Rochester] "above mentioned, commanded and caused the said Sir William Sautre, apparelled in priestly vestments, to be brought and appeare before him. That done, he declared and ex-

## 4 E 2

or atheist, he still retains the character; and though not a christian man, he is still a christian bishop, priest, or deacon: though he be degraded and excommunicated, he is in respect to the character still the same. Though he be cut off from the church, he is still a minister in the church. In such a situation, to perform any of the sacred functions would be in him a deadly sin, but these would be equally valid as before. Thus he may not be within the pale of the church himself, and yet be in the church as a minister of Jesus Christ. He may openly and solemnly blaspheme God, and abjure the faith of Christ; he may apostatize to Judaism, to Mahometism, to Paganism, he still retains the character. He may even become a priest of Jupiter, or a priest of Baal, and still continue a priest of Jesus Christ. The character say the Schoolmen, is not cancelled even in the *damned*, but remains with the wicked to their disgrace and greater confusion; so that in hell they are the ministers of Jesus Christ, and messengers of the new covenant!! [see the late Dr. Campbell's Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, for a more full and striking view of this subject.] That our legislature, in sanctioning the said doctrine, did really mean to go the whole length the Schoolmen did, or adopt all their ideas concerning it, may, perhaps, admit of some doubt: but after agreeing with them in the main point, it might be thought hardly worth their while to hesitate about the smaller matters. Be this as it may, the convocation over which archbishop Arundel presided, in the process against Sawtre, seem to have been entirely of a different opinion, both from the Schoolmen and our said late parliament, on this notable question of clerical indelibility.



pounded in English to all the clergy and people, there in a great multitude assembled; that all processe was finished and ended against the said Sir W. Sautre. Which thing finished, before the pronouncing of the said sentence of the relapse against the said Sir William, as is premised, he often then and there recited and read. And for that he saw the said William in that behalf *nothing abashed*; he proceeded to his degradation and actual deposition in forme as followeth."

"*In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* † We Thomas by God's permission archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and Legate of the apostolike Sea, do denounce thee William Sautre, otherwise called Chautris, *chaplainne fained*, in the habite and apparell of a priest, as an heretike, and one refallen into heresie, by this our sentence definitive by councell, assent, and authority to be condemned, and by conclusion of all our fellow brethren, fellow bishops, prelates councell provincially, and of the whole clergy, do degrade and *deprive thee of thy priestly order*. And in sign of degradation and actual deposition from thy priestly dignity, for thine incorrigibility and want of amendment, we take from thee the *patent* and *chalice*, and doe deprive thee of all power and authority of celebrating the masse, and also we pull from thy backe the *casule*, and take from thee the *vestment*, and deprive thee of all manner of priestly honour."

"Also, We Thomas, the aforesaid archbishop, by authority, counsell, and assent, which upon the foresaid

† The sentence printed in italics is given in *latin* by Fox,

William we have, being *deacon pretended*, in the habit and apparell of a deacon, having the *New Testament* in thy hands, being an heretike, and twice fallen, condemned by sentence as is aforesaid, do *degrade and put thee from the order of a deacon*. And in token of this thy degradation and actuall deposition, we take from thee the book of the *New Testament*, and the *stole*, and do deprive thee of all authority in reading of the gospell, and of all and all manner of dignity of a deacon."

"Also, we Thomas archbishop aforesaid, by authority counsell, and assent, which over thee the foresaid William we have, being a *subdeacon pretended*, in the habit and vestment of a subdeacon, an heretike, and twice fallen, condemned by sentence, as is aforesaid, do *degrade and put thee from the order of subdeacon*; and in token of this thy degradation and actuall deposition, we take from thee the *albe* and *maniple*, and do deprive thee of all and all manner of subdiaconicall dignity."

"Also, We Thomas archbishop aforesaid, by counsell, assent and authority which we have over thee the foresaid William, an *Acolyte pretended*, wearing the habit of an acolyte, and heretike, twice fallen, by our sentence, as is aforesaid, condemned, doe degrade and put from thee all order of an acolyte; and in signe and token of this thy degradation and actuall deposition, we take from thee the *candlestick* and *taper*, and also the *urceolum*, and do deprive thee of all and all manner of dignity of an Acolyte.—Also, We Thomas archbishop aforesaid, by assent, council, and authority, which upon thee the foresaid William we have, an *Exorcist*

*pretensed*, in the habite of an exorcist or holy water clerke, being an heretike, twice fallen, and by our sentence, as is aforesaid, condemned, do *degrade and depose thee from the order of an Exorcist*; and in token of this thy degradation and actual deposition, we take from thee the *book of conjurations*, and do deprive thee of all and singular dignity of an exorcist.”

“Also, We Thomas archbishop aforesaid, by assent, counsell, and authority, as is abovesaid, do degrade and depose thee the foresaid William, *reader pretensed*, clothed in the habit of a reader, an heretick, twice fallen, and by our sentence, as aforesaid, condemned, from the order of a reader: and, in token of this thy degradation and actual deposition, we take from thee the *book of the divine lections* (that is, the book of the church legend) and do deprive thee of all and singular manner of dignity of such a reader.—Also, We Thomas archbishop aforesaid, by authority, counsell, and assent, the which we have, as is aforesaid, doe degrade, and put thee the foresaid William Sawtre, *Sexton pretensed*, in the habit of a sexton, and wearing a surplice, being an heretike, twice fallen, by our sentence definitive condemned, as aforesaid, from the order of a sexton: and, in token of this thy degradation and actual deposition, for the causes aforesaid, we take from thee the *keyes of the church doore*, and thy *surplice*, and do deprive thee of all and singular manner of commodities of a doore-keeper.”

“Also, by the authority of omnipotent God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and by our authority,



counsell, and assent of our whole councel provinciall above written, we do degrade thee, and depose thee, being here personally present before us, from orders, benefices, priviledges, and habit in the church; and for thy pertinacy incorrigible we doe degrade thee *before the secular court of the high constable and marshall of England*, being personally present; and do depose thee from all and singular *clerkely honours and dignities whatsoever*, by these writings. Also in token of thy degradation and deposition, here actually we have *caused thy crowne and ecclesiasticall tonsure in our presence to be rased away*, and utterly to be abolished, like unto the form of a secular layman; and here we do put upon the head of thee, the aforesaid William, the cap of a lay secular person; beseeching the court aforesaid that they will receive *favourably* \* the said William unto them thus recommitted.

Having thus performed their part of this diabolical work, and delivered the prisoner into the hands of the civil magistrate, “the bishops, not yet contented, cease

\* If there be any one thing more detestable than the rest among the proceedings of Arundel and his inquisitorial associates, against Sawtre, it is their affecting to feel for him, or commiserate his case and recommend him to the *favour* of the secular power, at the very time when they were delivering him up as a sheep to the slaughter (or to the butcher) or as a victim for immediate immolation. They felt no pity for him, and knew that the magistrate would shew him no favour.—The judges of the *Inquisition* also are said always to express much tenderness and goodwill towards those they condemn to the flames.—Our *protestant* and *pretended evangelical sects*, likewise, are often heard to use the language of kindness and pity towards those whom they have pronounced to be *hereticks*, at the same time they are doing all they can to render them odious in the eyes of all men, and deprive them of the kind offices and good opinion of all their fellow-citizens.

not, (says our historian) to call upon the king to cause him to be brought forth to speedy execution. Whereupon the king, ready enough, and too much, to gratifie the clergy, and to retaine their favours, directeth out a terrible decree against the said William Sawtre, and sent it to the maior and sheriffes of London to be put in execution." This terrible decree, or royal warrant for the prisoner's execution, was obtained, it seems, on the very day of his degradation, when the convocation passed their final sentence and gave him up to the civil power: so that there was here no time lost; and the closing scene, no doubt, soon ensued. The royal decree, or warrant was as follows:

*"The decree of our sovereigne Lord the King and his Councill in parliament, against a certain new sprung up heretick. To the maior and sherifs of London, &c. Whereas the reverend father, Thomas archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England and legat of the apostolike sea, by the assent, consent, and councill of other bishops, and his brethren suffragans, and also of all the whole clergy within his province or dioces, gathered together in his provinciall councill, the due order of the law being observed in all points in this behalfe, has pronounced and declared, by his definitive sentence, William Sawtre sometime chaplaine, fallen again into his most damnable heresie, the which before time the said William had abjured, thereupon to be a most manifest heretick, and therefore hath decreed that he should be degraded, and hath for the same cause really degraded him from all prerogative and privilege*

of the clergy, decreeing to leave him unto the secular power; and hath really so left him, according to the laws and canonicall sanctions set forth in his behalfe, and also that our holy mother the church hath no further to do in the premisses : We therefore being zealous in religion, † and reverent lovers of the catholike faith, willing and minding to maintaine and defend the holy church, and the lawes and liberties of the same, to root all such errors and heresies out of our kingdome of England, and with condigne punishment to correct and punish all heretikes, or such as be convict; provided always that both according to the law of God and man, and the canonicall institutions in this behalfe accustomed, such heretikes convict and condemned in forme aforesaid ought to be burned with fire : We command you as straitly as we may, or can, firmly enjoyning you that you cause the said William, being in your custody, in some publike or open place within the liberties of your city aforesaid ( the cause aforesaid being published unto the people ) to be put into the fire, and there in the same fire really to be burned, to the great horreur of his offence, and the manifest example of other christians. Fail not in the execution hereof upon the perill that will fall thereupon.” \*

This memorable warrant ( dated 26th. of February ) was, no doubt, speedily executed: perhaps the very day on which it was issued. The death which it orders or appoints for the alleged crime of heresy, or to which it devotes the reputed offender, is supposed to distinguish it from all other warrants that had ever been issued

† Yes, devilishly so.

\* Fox 675.



before by our English monarchs: at least, there is not known to have been here, previously to this reign, any law dooming adjudged heretics to the flames. Henry IV. therefore, stands preeminent among our sovereigns as a promoter of the burning of those whom the priests pronounced or denominated heretics. It is remarkable enough that the poor lollards found such an enemy in him, who, as well as his father, had long affected to be their great patron. But it was all, probably, nothing but policy: neither father nor son can be supposed ever to have been real lovers of either liberty or justice. Henry's accession to the throne (to which he had no right) disclosed his true character; and he has been known ever since, as one of the worst of our princes. Arundel and his brethren helped him to obtain and usurp the crown, in hopes that he, in return, would help them in such affairs as this of Sawtre: nor were they disappointed. They favoured his baseness on that, and he favoured theirs, to the utmost extent of their wishes, on this and on all similar occasions.

The execution of Sawtre was the first fruit of the new law for burning heretics; and it was soon followed by an abundant harvest. The number of those who were burnt for their religion in England whilst this execrable law was in force, which was near 300 years, was enormously great. As Sawtre stands at the head of those memorable confessors, it was thought requisite to be somewhat particular and circumstantial in our account of him. The sons of freedom will venerate his memory, while they detest and execrate that of his crowned and mitred persecutors. Of our crowned demons none could

well exceed *Henry IV.* and of our mitred ones scarce any ever did or could go beyond *Arundel and Spencer*. For Sawtre to fall into such hands must truly have been a most sad and pitiable case. It was like falling among thieves, or into a den of hungry lions.

It is pretty remarkable that the prisoner's plan of reform, or intended application to parliament was not allowed to come at all under the discussion of the convocation; although they had pretended to take it under their serious consideration, instead of its going before parliament. But they knew better than to have done so, and took a much shorter and surer course to gain their point and effect the reformer's ruin, by proceeding simply on a religious ground, and having him tried as a relapsed heretic. So well did they know their business, and how to avail themselves of all the advantages belonging to their exalted situation.—We shall now take our leave of them, and also of William Sawtre, whose memory we have here endeavoured to rescue from oblivion. His being so distinguished a character among the then inhabitants of Lynn, and, especially, his being the English porto-martyr, will, it is presumed, sufficiently justify and apologize for the unusual length of this article—and as it exhibits religious bigotry and intolerance in their native deformity and hatefulness, it may be of use to those individuals among us, of every denomination, who have not yet made any, or much progress in the christian virtues of forbearance, candour, and liberality.

3. ALAN, *Aleyne*, or *Allen of Lynn*, was, it seems a native of this town, and contemporary with Sawtre, but a younger man, and long his survivor, and so represented as flourishing about twenty years later. He

was evidently of a very different cast from him, and never gave himself the least concern, as far as we know, about the politics of the time, or the *reform* of civil or ecclesiastical abuses. Perfectly regardless of the oppressions of the rulers and the grievances of the people, he employed his time in poring over the huge volumes of the Fathers and Schoolmen, and writing indexes to them. We are told he made *indexes* to no less than 33 of those authors, among which were Augustin, Anselm, and Aquinas. Such an employment, though of no real use or benefit to the community, procured him the honour of being classed among the eminent men, or literati of that age; and his name has been handed to posterity as one of the distinguished characters which Lynn has produced. His skill and industry in making those indexes might, no doubt, deserve commendation, but can hardly be said to entitle him to any degree of literary celebrity. He may be said therefore to have acquired more fame than was fairly his due. But so it has often happened: while the merits of some have been greatly underated, those of others, on the contrary, have been magnified beyond all reason and justice. Alan received his education at Cambridge, where he obtained the degree of Doctor in Divinity. He was of the order of Carmelites, or White Friars, and therefore his residence here must have been at their great house, or convent in South Lynn. How long he resided there cannot now be said. We are told that he died about the year 1428, and was buried at Lynn. The place of his burial, no doubt, was the dormitory of his own convent, situated on that spot in South Lynn now called the *Friars*.

4. WILLIAM WALLYS. He was cotemporary



with the last, and like him one of our Lynn friars, but of the augustinian order. He was not, like the former a mere reader, and maker of indexes, but a real author, and is said to have written many books; but their titles and contents are no longer remembered or known. They might be on interesting subjects, and those subjects might there be handled in a judicious and masterly manner; or they might not. However that was, and whatever they were, it seems they have long ago perished, like innumerable other works, no less valuable and worthy of preservation; and, perhaps, much more so. But his name, has been preserved, as one of the eminent Lynn men of former times. How long he resided here, we are not informed; but we are told that he died in 1421; and we may presume that he was buried in the convent or dormitory of the Austin friars, which stood behind the house now inhabited by Mr. Rishton. He must have been eminent in his day, especially among those of his fraternity, for we are told that he became *general* of that order.

5. JOHN BARET, or *Barret*. He too was a friar, of the same order with Alan; that of the *Carmelites*. He was a native of this town, and educated at Cambridge, “when learning (as *Fuller* says) ran low and degrees high in that University; so that a Scholar could scarcely be seen for Doctors; till the university, sensible of the mischief thereof, appointed Dr. Cranmer (afterwards abp. of Canterbury) to be the examiner of all candidates in Divinity. Amongst others, he stopt Baret, for his insufficiency, who then went back to Lynn, and applied himself to learning with such success, that in a short time he became an admirable scholar; and com-

mencing doctor, with due applause, lived many years a painful preacher at Norwich; always making mention of Cranmer as the means of his happiness." But we find that he had something of the Vicar of Bray about him; for it seems he was at first a papist; afterwards, in the latter part of Henry the eighth's reign, and that of Edward, a protestant; again, in that of Mary, a zealous papist; and lastly, in that of Elizabeth, a staunch protestant. It seems, however, that he died soon after the commencement of the latter reign: and one would hope that he died in the true faith.—As to his veering or changing with the times, where is the impropriety of that? Ought not the ministers of a national or state religion to be submissive to, or directed by the state, from which they derive their creed, their revenue, their power, and their every thing?

The subjects of the foregoing biographical articles being all *ecclesiastics*, and all the *ecclesiastics* of any note that distinguished Lynn, as far as we know, during the long period of which we have been treating, it might be expected that we should in the next place give a list of the eminent *laymen* that sprung up here in the course of the same period. But, alas! we look and search for them in vain: hardly can one be found whose name deserves to be recorded, or remembered by posterity. William de Bittering, John de Wentworth, Bartholomy Petipas, and Thomas Miller, four of our ancient aldermen, were perhaps the most memorable, or notable that can now be discovered. Of two of them somewhat has been said already, and a sort of promise was made to bring them again under review; but, upon

second thought, they did not appear to deserve so much further notice as was then intended.—As to

6. WILLIAM DE BITTERING, we learn that he flourished in the reign of Edward III. and was chosen mayor of the town four or five different times; so that he must have been here, in his day, a person of no small note and influence. The first year of his mayoralty, it seems, was 1351. He was again chosen, and served the office the ensuing year; so that he was then mayor two years successively. He is said to have been again chosen in 1355, but begged to be excused, on the plea that it was wearisome to be so often in office, and, especially, that he was then under a vow, to go on pilgrimage to a certain saint: from which it would seem that he was, in his way, a very religious character. His resignation was accepted, and *John de Coultshall*, who had served the year before, was chosen again, and had 20*l*, given him by the commonalty to take upon him the office for that year. Bittering was again chosen and served the office in 1358, and again in 1365. The time of his death does not appear. He was buried in St. Nicholas' chapel, where his grave is known by a flat stone of uncommon dimensions, being above ten feet long and above six broad, and is supposed to be the oldest sepulchral monument now existing in this town. (Mackerell, 134.)

7. 8. JOHN DE WENTWORTH and BARTHOLOMY PETIPAS. They are not here coupled or joined together because they were friends for no two men could well be further from that, but rather because they were foes, and the heads of two hostile factions, by which the town was kept in a state of constant distraction for a great length



of time. It seems impossible now to ascertain the ground, or cause of that deadly animosity which those two factions, or these two men entertained against each other. Lollardism, we know, did them much agitate the kingdom, but we cannot say that it was the occasion of this discord at Lynn. Nor can we say that it was a mere political broil, or contest between the partizans of the episcopal feudal prerogatives and their opponents, though this may seem more probable, as it appears from pages 365 and 559 of this volume, that Petipas was on good, and Wentworth on bad terms with the bishop. However this was, it is pretty evident that these two were mighty men and men of renown here in those days.

9. THOMAS MILLER, or *Milner*. He was the leading man among our ancestors in the reign of Henry VIII. being *governor* of the town, and mayor also one time for four successive years ; and he served that office afterwards twice, if not more ; so that he was mayor of Lynn six or seven times, which is not known to have been the case with any other. But what made him the most memorable was his successful contest, or law-suit with the bishop, during the former part of his mayoralty, about their respective claims to have the *Sword* carried before them. This legal decision established the mayor's independence upon the bishop.

Having now paid our tribute of respect to the memory of our eminent men of those times, we shall here close this chapter, which brings us down to the era of the reformation.

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*End of Part III.*

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## SUPPLEMENT

TO THE HISTORY OF THE ROYAL TOUCH.

See page 326.

Since the section on the royal touch has been printed off, a paper has appeared in the *Monthly Magazine*, under the signature of *I. Bannantine*, which casts some further light upon that subject. As it is presumed it will not be unacceptable to the reader, we take the liberty of inserting here the substance of it.—“It does not appear (says that writer) that any of the House of Brunswick have asserted this royal function; at least, it has not been publicly announced, as was formerly the practice: but were his present majesty to resume it, such faith is yet put in the assertion of a king, that all the courtiers and the great body of the ignorant multitude would not hesitate to believe its infallibility. The last sovereign who appears to have exercised this miraculous gift was queen *Anne*. In the royal gazette of Mar. 12. 1712. appears the following public notice: “It being her Majesty’s royal intention to touch publicly for the Evil the 17th. of this instant March, and so to continue for sometime, it is her Majesty’s Command, that tickets be delivered the day before at Whitehall, and that all persons bring a certificate, signed by the minister and church-wardens of their respective parishes, that they *never received the royal touch*.”—He further adds, that *Wiseman*, Sergeant Surgeon to Chas. 2nd, in a treatise on the Evil, speaks of the *royal touch* in the following

terms: "I have myself been frequent eye witness of many hundreds of cures performed by his majesty's touch alone, without the assistance of chirurgery, and those many of them such as had tired out the endeavours of able chirurgeons before they came thither. It were endless to relate what I myself have seen, and what I have received acknowledgement of by Letters, not only from the several parts of the nation, but also from Ireland, Scotland, Jersey, and Germany."—It was the office of Wiseman, as Sergeant Surgeon, to select such afflicted objects as were proper to be presented for the royal touch.—Is it possible (I. Bannantine here exclaims) to desire a more satisfactory testimony of these miraculous cures, than that of a man of science and respectability, under whose immediate inspection they were performed, and who had "himself been a frequent eye-witness of many hundreds of cures performed by his majesty's touch alone!"—The late judge Barrington (he further observes) relates what he heard from an old man, a witness in a cause, with regard to this miraculous power of healing.—"He had by his evidence fixed the time of a fact, by queen Anne's having been at Oxford, and touched him, whilst a child, for the Evil. When he had finished his evidence, I had an opportunity of asking him, whether he really was cured? Upon which he observed, with a significant smile, that he believed himself never to have had a complaint that deserved to be considered as the Evil; but that his parents were poor, and *had no objection to the bit of Gold.*" It seems to me (adds the judge) this piece of Gold, that was given to those who were touched, accounts for the great resort



on this occasion, and the supposed afterwards miraculous cures.—*Gimelli*, the famous traveller, gives an account of 1600 persons offering themselves to be cured of the Evil by Lewis xiv. on Easter Sunday, 1686. *Gimelli* himself was present at the ceremony: every Frenchman received 15 Souce, and every foreigner 30. This power of healing assumed by the kings of France occasioned great resort to Francis I. while prisoner at Madrid, by the Spaniards, who had not such faith in their own king's touch? It appears by a proclamation of Jas. I. Mar. 25. 1617. that the kings of England would not permit any resort to them for these miraculous cures in the summer-time. By another proclamation of June 18. 1626. it is ordered that no one shall apply for this purpose, who does not bring a proper certificate, that he has never been touched before: the same, it has been already seen, were the terms on which *queen Anne* granted her royal touch.—In a prayer-book printed in 1703, is a form of the Church-service for the occasion of the royal touch. After the Lord's Prayer it is stated, "Then shall the infirm persons, one by one, be presented to the queen; while the queen is laying her hands upon them and is putting the Gold about their necks, the chaplain that officiates turning himself to her majesty shall say these words following: "God give a blessing to this work and grant that these sick persons on whom the queen lays her hands may recover through Jesus Christ our Lord!"—After some other prayers, the chaplain, standing with his face towards those come to be healed, shall say: "The Almighty God, who is a most strong tower to all them that put their trust in him, to whom all

things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth, do bow and obey, be evermore your defence; and make you know and feel that there is no other name under heaven given to man, and through whom you may receive health and salvation, but only in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! Amen!" —Mo. Mag. Mar. 1810.

## END OF VOLUME I.

### ERRATA.

Page 2, line 3, for *numerous* read *numerous*.—p. 9, l. 19, for *its* r. *their*.—p. 19, last line but two, dele comma after *least*.—p. 31, l. 3, for *drgree* r. *degree*.—p. 32, for *Section II*, r. *Section I*.—p. 79, l. 13, for *seperated* r. *separated*.—p. 83, l. 9, for *decerned* r. *discerned*.—p. 85, l. 1, for *sagacions* r. *sagacious*.—p. 106, l. 5, for *cansideration* r. *consideration*.—p. 107, l. 28, and 29, for *acdingly* r. *accordingly*.—p. 134, Note, l. 3, before *side* r. *east*.—p. 148, l. 14, for *numbers* r. *members*.—p. 192, l. 3, for *compositions* r. *composition*.—p. 96, last line for *heterodoxy* r. *heterodoxy*.—p. 200, l. 17, for *vareigata* r. *variegata*.—p. 210, l. 9, after *Britain* a period instead of a comma. —p. 222, l. 4, delete *o* in *collections*.—p. 237, l. 10, for *supremary* r. *supremacy*.—p. 312, last line but one, for *way* r. *may*.—p. 317, l. 14, for *loose* r. *lose*.—Same p. l. 18, for *miricles* r. *miracles*.—p. 325, l. 7, for *Susanna* r. *Joanna*.—p. 347, l. 11, after *Silthestow* a comma—and the next line, for *sinec* r. *since*.—p. 353, l. 3, for *Fountian* r. *Fountain*.—p. 374, l. 3, for *pregressive* r. *progressive*.—p. 395, l. 6, from the bottom, after *some* r. *of*.—p. 400, l. 2, and 14, for *arbitrary* r. *arbitrary*.—p. 402, l. 26, for *direction* r. *direction*.—p. 403, l. 2, for *appelation* r. *appellation*.—p. 507, l. 3, for *now* r. *new*.—p. 511, note, dele *them* in l. 16—same page l. 35 of the note, for *they were* r. *it was*.—p. 515, l. 12, for *da* r. *de*.—p. 517, l. 3, from bottom, for 1526, r. 1256 — p. 592, note l. 3, *member* of r. *members* and.











